2025-26 SEATTLE KRAKEN

YEARBOOK

Look at Seattle Through a Muckleshoot Lens

In today's city, we still see our ancestral homeland. Its bustling downtown waterfront holds links to our heritage. The mountains and valleys echo with the ancient beat of our drums.

This is where our ancestors celebrated the return of the salmon. This is where we hunted, gathered, fished, and foraged. This is where we welcomed our neighbors — and still do.

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe invites you to take a look at the Seattle region through our eyes, and learn about how we continue to protect the legacy and culture of our Duwamish ancestors.

Our Seattle Heritage Runs Deep.
We are Muckleshoot.

MUCKLESHOOT INDIAN TRIBE

LEARN MORE FROM MUCKLESHOOT STORYTELLERS

Learn more about our history and culture directly from Tribal Members at **WeAreMuckleshoot.org/Storytelling**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

6 SCHEDULE
9 EXECUTIVES
16 HOCKEY OPERATIONS
22 COACHES
26 KRAKEN HOCKEY NETWORK
28 BROADCAST PERSONALITIES
30 INSIDE GAME ENTERTAINMENT
34 FROM START OF FRANCHISE TO FINNISH
37 KRAKEN PLAYERS
120 IN THE SYSTEM
124 FIREBIRDS SCHEDULE
125 FIREBIRD COACHES
126 DEVELOPING THE FUTURE
128 LAMBERT'S LENS
130 PUT STOCK IN THE BLOCK
132 JOHN BARR: SOUND OF HOCKEY
136 THIRD JERSEYS

SEATTLE KRAKEN

2025-26 OFFICIAL YEARBOOK

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2025-26 SEASON

SEATTLE KRAKEN SCHEDULE

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SEPTEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 VAN 5 PM	22	23 CGY 6 PM	24 EDM TBD	25	26 VAN 7 PM	27
28	29 CGY 7 PM	30	1	2	3	4

OCTOBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	1 EDM 7 PM	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 ANA 7 PM	10	11 VGK 7 PM
12	13	14 MTL 4 PM	15	16 OTT 4 PM	17	18 TOR 4 PM
19	20 PHI 4 PM	21 WSH 4 PM	22	23 WPG 5 PM	24	25 EDM 7 PM
26	27	28 MTL 7:30 PM	29	30	31	1

NOVEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26	27	28	29	30	31	1 NYR 7 PM
2	3 CHI 7 PM	4	5 SJS 7 PM	6	7	8 STL 4 PM
9 DAL 4 PM	10	11 CBJ 7 PM	12	13 WPG 7 PM	14	15 SJS 7 PM
16	17	18 DET 4 PM	19	20 CHI 5 PM	21	22 PIT 4 PM
23 NYI 2 PM	24	25	26 DAL 7 PM	27	28	29 EDM 1 PM
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	1	2	3	4 EDM 6 PM	5	6 DET 7 PM
7	8 MIN 7 PM	9	10 LAK 7 PM	11	12 UTA 6 PM	13
14 BUF 5 PM	15	16 COL 7 PM	17	18 CGY 6 PM	19	20 SJS 7 PM
21	22 ANA 7 PM	23 LAK 7 PM	24	25	26	27
28 PHI 5 PM	29 VAN 7 PM	30	31	1	2	3

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1 NSH 7 PM	2 VAN 7:30 PM	3
4	5 CGY 6:30 PM	6 BOS 7 PM	7	8 MIN 7 PM	9	10 CAR 4 PM
11	12 NYR 4 PM	13	14 NJD 4 PM	15 BOS 4 PM	16	17 UTA 2 PM
18	19 PIT 2 PM	20	21 NYI 7 PM	22	23 ANA 7 PM	24
25 NJD 1 PM	26	27 WSH 7 PM	28	29 TOR 7 PM	30	31 VGK 7 PM

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 ANA 7 PM	4 LAK 7 PM	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 DAL 5 PM	26 STL 5 PM	27	28 VAN 7 PM

MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 CAR 7 PM	3	4 STL 7 PM	5	6	7 OTT 7 PM
8	9	10 NSH 7 PM	11	12 COL 7 PM	13	14 VAN 7 PM
15 FLA 5 PM	16	17 TBL 7 PM	18	19 NSH 5 PM	20	21 CBJ 2 PM
22	23	24 FLA 4 PM	25	26 TBL 4 PM	27	28 BUF 2:30 PM
29	30	31 EDM 6 PM	1	2	3	4

APRIL 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1	2 UTA 7 PM	3	4 CHI 7 PM
5	6 WPG 4:30 PM	7 MIN 5 PM	8	9 VGK 7 PM	10	11 CGY 4 PM
12	13 LAK 7 PM	14	15 VGK 7 PM	16 COL 7:30 PM	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

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SAMANTHA HOLLOWAY

OWNER & NHL GOVERNOR

Samantha Holloway is the owner of the Seattle Kraken and chairperson of the Executive Committee. A tech entrepreneur and investor, Samantha earned a BA from the University of Michigan, and her Masters in Forensic Psychology and MBA from the University of Denver. Samantha is Partner and Co-Founder of Hat Labs and 2nd & Fillmore, General Partner of Wildcat Partner Holdings, and an investor in the WBNA's Seattle Storm. She sits on the NHL Board of Governors, the board of the Space Needle, Cast, and is a member of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the American Cancer Society's CEOs Against Cancer. Samantha works closely with the executive leadership team of the Seattle Kraken to create a world-class franchise and meaningfully invest in the Pacific Northwest community.

TOD LEIWEKE

CEO

Tod Leiweke is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Seattle Hockey Partners and oversaw the launch of the NHL expansion team and redevelopment of Climate Pledge Arena. Prior to being appointed CEO in April 2018, Tod served as the NFL's Chief Operating Officer from 2015-2018; CEO of Tampa Bay Lightning from 2010-2015; CEO of Seattle Seahawks/Sounders from 2002–2010; President of Minnesota Wild from 1997-2002; Executive Director of The First Tee from 1994-1997; and Golden State Warriors from 1987-1994.

VICTOR DE BONIS

PRESIDENT & ALTERNATE NHL GOVERNOR

Victor de Bonis is President of the Seattle Kraken and NHL Alternate Governor. de Bonis has been at the forefront of establishing the Seattle Kraken as the NHL's 32nd team. Prior to joining the Kraken as Chief Operating Officer in October of 2018, de Bonis worked for the Vancouver Canucks, serving as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) from July 2006 to May 2016, and from September 2009 to May 2017 he also held the title of NHL Alternate Governor.

ROB LAMPMAN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

As Chief Operating Officer, Rob Lampman oversees Seattle Kraken Business Operations and the Kraken Community Iceplex. He has worked in Sports & Entertainment for 25+ years. He previously served as Head of FIFA World Cup Operations and later Business Development for FIFA in Zurich before founding and operating Eiger Marketing Group.

EXECUTIVES

LANCE LOPES

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL

Lance Lopes has been with the enterprise since December of 2016. After assisting on securing the right to build a new arena at Seattle Center, he became the first employee of the new NHL hockey franchise. In addition to his legal responsibilities, he led the effort to build the training facility for the team. He is now focused on development projects. He previously served as Senior Associate Athletic Director for the University of Washington, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for the Seattle Seahawks and Vice President and General Counsel of the Green Bay Packers.

JEFF WEBSTER

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

Jeff Webster serves as Chief Commercial Officer for the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena where he leads partnership sales and marketing, broadcast media partnerships, premium events, and retail merchandise verticals. His work also includes revenue oversight of the Kraken Hockey Network, Seattle Center, and key regional 3rd party clients within OVG's Global Partnerships division. Previously, Jeff was with AEG in Los Angeles, focused on revenue generation for some of the most iconic brands and venues in sports and entertainment.

KATIE TOWNSEND

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Katie Townsend leads enterprise communications, strategic storytelling and crisis communications. Since joining the organization in 2019, she has guided the team through pivotal moments including arena construction, team naming, and inaugural season. Her efforts help drive organizational success through compelling narratives and reputation management. She previously worked for WE Communications following a successful career with the BBC as a senior news and sport producer.

BILL CHAPIN

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CHIEF TICKETING OFFICER

Bill Chapin leads ticket sales, premium hospitality and service team for both the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena. Prior to joining the Seattle Kraken, he was the SVP of Business Operations at the Kansas City Chiefs. Over his career, he has held leadership roles in five different sports leagues (NHL, NFL, MLB, MLS & NBA) including time with the Seattle Seahawks, Los Angeles Kings, LA Clippers, and Staples Center. He sits on the Board of Directors for Seattle Aquarium.

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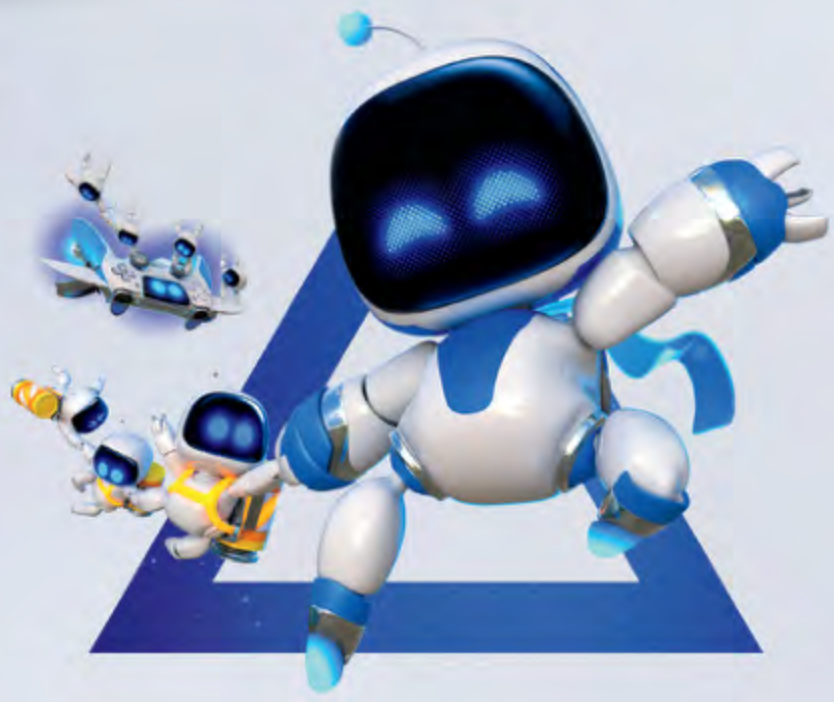

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EXECUTIVES

HEWAN TESHOME

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL COUNSEL

Hewan Teshome oversees commercial legal affairs, including internal and external policy matters, labor and employment, and risk management, for the Seattle Kraken, Climate Pledge Arena and the One Roof Foundation. Prior to joining the organization, she was vice president and general counsel for VICIS, a local sports technology company. She started her career as a corporate lawyer advising media and sports companies in New York. Hewan is proudly Seattle-born and raised. She holds a JD from Stanford Law School and BA from New York University.

KENDALL TYSON

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCE & BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

Kendall Tyson is responsible for overseeing the financial affairs, strategic planning, and data management of the Kraken and its affiliates. She brings financial and operational cross-industry expertise from her previous roles at Accenture, Topgolf and the LPGA. Kendall holds an MBA from Yale School of Management and bachelor's degrees from Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology.

MARI HORITA

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, SOCIAL IMPACT & CIVIC AFFAIRS

Mari Horita is executive director of One Roof Foundation, the joint philanthropic arm of the Seattle Kraken and Climate Pledge Arena. In addition, she leads the organization's social impact, philanthropic, DEI, government relations and civic affairs work. She currently serves as Chair of the Downtown Seattle Association Board. Mari has decades of experience working across public, private, and nonprofit sectors to advance positive social change. Prior to joining the Kraken, Mari was President and CEO of ArtsFund, where she led the organization's strategic transition to better represent and serve the evolving population and arts community in the Puget Sound region. Mari began her professional career as a lawyer at Bogle & Gates, and later at Dorsey & Whitney and K&L Gates.

ALI DANIELS

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, MARKETING

Ali Daniels joined the Kraken in 2024 as senior vice president leading marketing efforts and leads the marketing, brand and game presentation teams, focusing on cohesive brand expression and strategic direction. Previously, as chief marketing officer for Visit Seattle, she developed the city's brand identity through compelling storytelling and innovative outreach to residents and visitors alike, establishing the city as a must-visit destination. Ali's expertise lies in integrating strategic insight with creative execution, ensuring that every initiative resonates with audiences. She began her career with the NBA Seattle SuperSonics.

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EXECUTIVES

CHRIS BRUMWELL

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, BROADCAST & MEDIA RELATIONS

Chris Brumwell oversees media relations and broadcast for the Seattle Kraken and presided over the debut of the Kraken Hockey Network during the 2024-25 season. He has worked in the sports and entertainment industry for more than 25 years. He previously served as Vice President, Communications, Community and Social Impact for Canucks Sports and Entertainment. He has held leadership roles with the Organizing Committee for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and lululemon athletica. He began his career with the NBA Vancouver Grizzlies.

KATY SEMTNER

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PEOPLE & CULTURE

Katy Semtner leads all strategic human resources initiatives for the Seattle Kraken, including talent acquisition, compensation, benefits and employee engagement. Drawing on more than 25 years of experience in human resources leadership across the sports and hospitality industries, Katy has a proven track record of building people-first cultures. Before joining the Kraken, she served as Vice President of Human Resources for the Oklahoma City Thunder and Director of Human Resources for the NBA Seattle Sonics and WNBA Seattle Storm. Her passion for creating a thriving and inclusive work environment continues to drive the Kraken's culture of excellence and innovation.

CELEBRATING THE CAREERS OF FLORA TAYLOR AND IGGY TARAJOS

FLORA TAYLOR

SENIOR MANAGER, EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Flora was among the first employees of NHL Seattle, long before the arena was completed, the team had a name or one skater glided across training center ice. After 26 years with the NFL in New York, highlighted by a symbiotic working relationship with then NFL COO Tod Leiweke. When Tod embraced the Kraken CEO role, Flora didn't miss out on the adventure. She swapped East Coast for West to be integral in launching the NHL's 32nd franchise. She handled more than we'll ever know building out the executive office staff and policies. Flora is beloved and will be deeply missed as she retires and heads back East to family, friends and the next adventure.

IGGY TARAJOS

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

After 35 stellar years in the ice rink industry, Iggy "Iceman" Tarajos closes a remarkable career defined by his tireless work ethic, passion for ice making and a genuine love of hockey. Following his service as a damage controlman in the U.S. Coast Guard, Iggy's hockey years started with the AHL Portland (OR) Pilots, then storied rinks in Portland (ME), Lake George (NY), Philadelphia and Tampa Bay. To the PNW's benefit, Iggy made one last career stop with his loyal dog, Roxie, heading west to Seattle for a vital role in shaping Kraken Community Iceplex from the world-class ice to leading construction projects. We bid farewell but will never forget our one-of-a-kind colleague and his camaraderie as he and new canine companion, Tucker, retire and drive his RV to warmer climates.

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HOCKEY OPERATIONS

RON FRANCIS

PRESIDENT

After four years as the first General Manager in Kraken history, Francis was named President of Hockey Operations this summer. He has been widely praised for his work acquiring Kaapo Kakko via trade in December 2024 and for his moves at the March 2025 trade deadline, acquiring two first-round draft picks and a second-round selection from Tampa Bay for forwards Yanni Gourde and Oliver Bjorkstrand, then another second-round pick from Winnipeg for forward Brandon Tanev. His team's 2024 offseason included free agent acquisitions and Stanley Cup champions Brandon Montour and Chandler Stephenson. Ron, a first-ballot Hall-of-Fame player, stands second all-time in assists (behind Wayne Gretzky) and fifth in scoring and games played. Francis worked his way up the Hurricanes organization, working in player development, scouting, coaching and operations to become GM over 12 years.

JASON BOTTERILL

EXECUTIVE VP, GENERAL MANAGER

In his first season as Seattle's General Manager, the 2025 offseason saw Botterill make notable additions to Seattle's roster including Mason Marchment, Ryan Lindgren, Freddy Gaudreau and Matt Murray, plus signing a three-year deal with Kaapo Kakko. Botterill joined the Kraken as Assistant GM in 2021 ahead of the inaugural season. Previously he was GM for Buffalo (2017 to 2020) after spending a decade working for the Pittsburgh front office, helping construct a Penguins roster that won three Stanley Cups (2009, 2016, 2017). He was part of the three-manager leadership team with Ron Francis for silver medalist Team Canada at the 2019 IIHF Men's Worlds. The former NHL left wing was selected by Dallas with the 20th overall pick in 1994 and appeared in 88 career regular-season games with Dallas, Atlanta, Calgary and Buffalo.

RICKY OLCZYK

VP, ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Ricky O enters his seventh year with the Kraken and serves as the Kraken's lead expert on contract negotiations, managing the salary cap and the NHL collective bargaining agreement. Olczyk was assistant GM to Ron Francis four years in Carolina, serving an integral role in transforming the player development system from the NHL lower third to top third team. He was a driving force in founding Oklahoma City's AHL franchise as assistant GM for Edmonton (seven seasons). At the 2016 World Cup, as assistant GM, he was a key part of the management team for Team Europe, which won silver after a tight best-of-three final vs. Canada.

ALEXANDRA MANDRYCKY

VP, ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Entering her fourth season as VP and Assistant GM and seventh year with the organization, Mandrycky oversees the Kraken amateur scouting group and the franchise's research & development team that works closely with the coaching and scouting staffs. Mandrycky worked for four seasons with the Minnesota Wild as a hockey operations analyst. The Atlanta native earned a B.S. in industrial engineering from Georgia Tech in 2013.

RYAN JANKOWSKI

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

Jankowski joins the Kraken after spending the 2024-25 season as Utah's associate director of amateur scouting. He filled the same role for NHL Arizona (2020-24). Jankowski's NHL experience includes seven years with the New York Islanders, four as an assistant GM (2006-10) overseeing amateur scouting and player development, plus early roles as director of European scouting and western scout. The Calgary, AB, native previously served in scout positions with Montreal and Buffalo (2010-13, 2017-2020), spending four years (2013-17) in several roles with Hockey Canada, including head scout and director of player personnel.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

NAMITA NANDAKUMAR
Director, Research & Development

DANI CHU
Senior Quantitative Analyst

FIONA MCKENNA
Data Engineer

TIM TAYLOR
Senior Software Developer

CONNOR FRANCIS
Research & Development Specialist

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

CORY MURPHY
Director, Player Development

FRANS NIELSEN
Player Development Consultant

KATELYN PARKER
Player Development Consultant

ZAC DALPE
Player Development Consultant

HOCKEY OPERATIONS

SUPPORT STAFF

DAVE TIPPETT
Coaching Staff Consultant

BRENNAN BAXANDALL
Director, Team Services

MIKE FRANCIS
Hockey Operations Manager

BROOKE COYLE
Executive Assistant to the General Manager

MOLLI PUTLAK
Hockey Operations - Executive Assistant

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

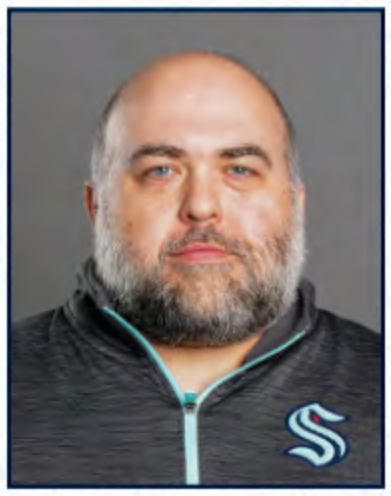
NATE BROOKRESON
Head Strength and Conditioning Coach

JAKE JENSEN
Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach

ATHLETIC TRAINING

JUSTIN ROGERS
Head Athletic Trainer

COLE HARDING
Assistant Athletic Trainer



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HOCKEY OPERATIONS

EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT STAFF

JEFF CAMELIO
Head Equipment Manager

KRIS STIERWALT
Assistant Equipment Manager

JAMES STUCKY
Assistant Equipment Manager

ANTHONY CAMELIO
Assistant Equipment Manager

SCOUTING STAFF

DIRECTORS

DAVE BASEGGIO
Director, Pro Scouting

ROBERT KRON
Director, Amateur Scouting

PRO SCOUTS

JOHN GOODWIN

LORNE HENNING

WILLIAM WHITE

COLLEGE SCOUTS

DAVE HUNTER

EUROPEAN SCOUTS

AXEL ALAVARRA

PELLE EKLUND

MARCUS FINGAL

SASU HOVI

ALEKSANDER PLYUSHEV

AMATEUR SCOUTS

TONY MACDONALD

JEFF CRISP

MIKE DAWSON

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CHRIS MACDONALD

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COACHES

LANE LAMBERT

HEAD COACH

About Lane: Joins the Kraken following as the Toronto Maple Leafs' associate coach in 2024-25. He was head coach of the New York Islanders from 2022 to 2024, compiling a 61-46-20 record and leading the team to the Stanley Cup Playoffs in 2023. Before becoming head coach, Lambert was the Islanders' associate coach from 2018 to 2022. From 2014 to 2018, he was an assistant coach with the Washington Capitals. During that span, the team was awarded the Presidents' Trophy for the best overall NHL regular-season record twice in a row (2015-16 and 2016-17) and won the Stanley Cup in 2018.

Prior to joining the Capitals, Lambert was an assistant coach with the Nashville Predators from 2011 to 2014. Lambert has been behind the bench for 21 playoff series and his teams have advanced to the second round of the NHL playoffs or better eight times. Lambert played 283 career games with the Detroit (which drafted him 25th overall), the New York, and Quebec (now Colorado). He won an AHL Calder Cup with Adirondack in 1986 and helped the Houston Aeros win the IHL's Turner Cup Championship in 1999.

Fun Facts: Lambert comes to Seattle knowing some familiar faces. He previously coached Kraken captain Jordan Eberle, Chandler Stephenson, and Philipp Grubauer, plus was on the Capitals staff with video coach, Tim Ohashi.

CHRIS TAYLOR

ASSISTANT COACH

About Chris: After finishing his playing career, the first-year Kraken assistant coach transitioned into coaching in 2011, becoming Rochester's player development coach in his first year, then assistant coach through the 2015-2016 season. In August 2016, he joined the AHL Wilkes Barre/Scranton as an assistant before being named the Americans' head coach in June 2017. He held the top job through June 2020, compiling a 116 65 33 record over three seasons and earning two playoff appearances. In October 2020, Taylor joined the New Jersey Devils as an assistant coach during his five seasons, helping lead the team to two playoff appearances before joining Lane Lambert's staff with the Kraken this summer.

Taylor's playing career spanned from 1992 to 2011 across the NHL, AHL, IHL and Europe. Drafted 27th overall by the New York Islanders in 1990, he appeared in 149 NHL games with the Islanders, Boston Bruins and Buffalo Sabres. He played in more than 600 AHL games, most notably in Rochester, where he ranks top-five all-time in assists, points and games played. Taylor finished his pro hockey playing career with three seasons in Germany and two more in Rochester.

Fun Facts: Taylor and Kraken general manager Jason Botterill were not just teammates when they both played for the Rochester Amerks (2002-03), Botterill played on the wing of Taylor's line. The two finished 1-2 in points for the team.

JESSICA CAMPBELL

ASSISTANT COACH

About Jessica: Enters her second year with the Kraken as an assistant coach after spending two seasons on Dan Bylsma's coaching staff in Coachella Valley. Under Campbell's tutelage, the Firebirds led the AHL with 252 goals in 2023-24 and reached the Calder Cup Finals in consecutive seasons. Prior to her tenure with Coachella Valley, Campbell worked as an assistant coach and skills coach for the Nürnberg Ice Tigers of the DEL, the top men's professional league in Germany, during the 2021-22 season. On an international level, Campbell served as an assistant coach for Team Germany at the 2022 IIHF World Championship. With the Kraken, she oversees the forwards with assistant coach Dave Lowry and works on the power play with assistant coach Bob Woods.

Fun Facts: She is the first full-time female assistant coach in NHL history to work behind the bench during the regular season. Played four seasons (2010-11 to 2013-14) of collegiate hockey at Cornell University, captaining the team her senior year (notching 15 goals and 25 assists for 40 points in 33 games) before making her professional debut for the Calgary Inferno. She transitioned into coaching as a high-in-demand skating and skills coach with NHL players and prospects based in her native Kelowna, BC. Represented Canada in international competition in several tournaments, including the IIHF U18 World Junior Championships in 2009 and 2010 and the IIHF World Championship in 2015.

AARON SCHNEEKLOTH

ASSISTANT COACH

About Aaron: Joined the Kraken coaching staff this past summer, working most closely with Kraken defensemen after a long career playing and coaching for the ECHL and AHL Colorado Eagles franchise. He began his pro career in 2001 after playing collegiate hockey at the University of North Dakota. He went on to have significant stints with teams including the St. John's Maple Leafs, Houston Aeros and ultimately the Colorado Eagles. He played for the Lakeland-based franchise from 2006 until his retirement in 2013, then continued in a coaching capacity through last season.

Following his playing career, which included 600-plus games across the AHL, CHL and ECHL, Schneekloth joined the Eagles' coaching staff as an assistant. He was named head coach in 2016. In his two seasons as head coach, he led the team to back-to-back ECHL Kelly Cup championships in 2017 and 2018 before the franchise transitioned to the AHL. First behind the bench in the AHL as an assistant, Schneekloth was again elevated to head coaching role in Colorado for the 2024-25 season. He led the Eagles to a top overall finish in the Pacific Division.

Fun Facts: While playing for the Eagles in the ECHL, Schneekloth was named Most Outstanding Defenseman two seasons in a row (2008-09 and 2009-10).

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COACHES

COLIN ZULIANELLO

GOALTENDING COACH

About Colin: Zulianello's playing career included four seasons at Colorado College (1997-2001) before he turned pro and competed in the ECHL and AHL, with stops in Peoria Rivermen, Toledo and Springfield (MA). After retiring as a player in 2005, a year in which he also served as a volunteer goalie coach for the ECHL Idaho Steelheads under first-year head coach and now Firebirds head coach Derek Laxdal, Zulianello began his coaching career at Lakehead University. He served as the goaltending coach from 2008 to 2016. He then moved into professional coaching roles, joining the AHL's Stockton Heat as a goaltending coach from 2016 to 2019 as part of the Calgary Flames organization. In 2022, Zulianello was named goaltending coach for the AHL affiliate Coachella Valley, where he worked closely with both Kraken goalie Joey Daccord and top goalie prospect Nikke Kokko.

Fun Facts: Zulianello comes by his ability to teach honestly. His mother was a French teacher, and the Thunder Bay, ON native has a master's degree in education from Lakehead University.

JUSTIN RAI

DIRECTOR OF PLAYER STRATEGY

About Justin: Taking on a new and innovative position as director of player strategy, Rai's love of the game and childhood immersion into skills drills sparked a post-playing day career in player development. Rai's played for NCAA Maine and the University of British Columbia, the latter where he earned a degree in human kinesiology. In 2019, he landed a skills coach role with the Coquitlam Express of the junior British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL) and set up a startup hockey skills development company to work with young NHLers and prospects. Over years of skills development work, he "realized most of the game is played without the puck" and tailored his training to focus on players making reads to help create time and space to make plays. The Kraken innovation is deploying Rai to travel with the team to optimize performance within coach Lane Lambert's systems of play.

Fun Facts: Rai's father, Ranjit, played for Team Canada at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea.

TIM OHASHI

ASSISTANT COACH, VIDEO

About Tim: Ohashi's career began with the Washington Capitals' coaching staff in 2014, where he served as an intern. Then-head coach Barry Trotz created and offered him a full-time video analyst role for the 2015-16 season. Ohashi would go on to be part of the 2017-2018 coaching staff that won the Stanley Cup, sharing the championship joy with Kraken head coach Lane Lambert (as an assistant coach) plus goalie Philipp Grubauer and center Chandler Stephenson. Ohashi moved to the Kraken upon its inception. He is his fifth season as an invaluable resource for game preparation and in-game reviews. A Washington, DC native, Ohashi played club hockey at Bates College in Lewiston, ME.

Fun Facts: A major back issue caused him to return home to Maryland for surgery, where his mother persuaded him to pursue a career in sports by taking graduate courses in sports management at Georgetown University. His wife grew up in Bellevue, WA, and his father lives in Washougal, WA.

ADAM PURNER

VIDEO ANALYST

About Adam: Served as video coach for American Hockey League Hershey for three seasons, joining the staff in 2022. He helped Hershey to back-to-back Calder Cup titles in 2023 and 2024. Prior to joining Hershey, Purner spent two seasons working as video coach for the New Jersey Devils' AHL affiliate (Binghamton 2020-21, Utica 2021-22). He has also worked with USA Hockey, serving as the video coordinator for the Women's National Team at the 2022 IIHF Women's World Championship. Purner was a goalie video analyst for the St. Louis Blues in 2020, plus worked for the Western Hockey League's Portland Winterhawks as hockey video coordinator from 2016-19, and held the title of video coach in 2019-20.

Fun Facts: When named to the role, Purner expressed joy at returning to the Pacific Northwest. Purner has served as a volunteer goaltending development coordinator with USA Hockey, working with local hockey associations to further develop goaltenders, and identify candidates for regional and national development camps.

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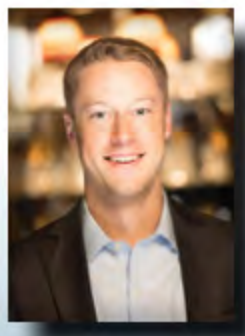


Nathan P. Roberts

Amanda M. Searle

Evan T. Fuller

Meaghan M. Driscoll

Marta L. O'Brien

Samuel J. Daheim

Jackson R. Pahlke

Matthew J. Wurdeman

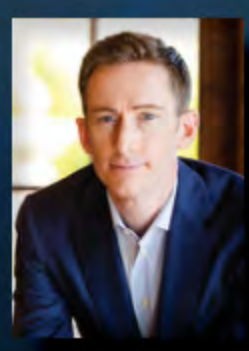
Hollie M. Connelly

Christian P. McDonald

John Francis Connelly

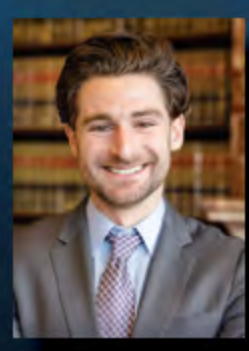
Dalia Ibrahim

Susan E. Wassell



John B. McEntire, IV

Colin G. Prince



Gregory D. Zacharia

"You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take."

-Wayne Gretzky

ON THE AIR:
CHEMISTRY & COMMENTATORS

KRAKEN HOCKEY NETWORK AND KJR/IHEART AUDIO NETWORK PROVIDE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED AND HIGHLY ACCESSIBLE BROADCASTS, PLUS DEEP ADMIRATION AMONG THE TEAM'S ANNOUNCERS AND ANALYSTS

The Kraken Hockey Network is in its second season as the team-operated option for fans to watch games with the promise that the vast majority of fans in Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho and Montana will be able to watch at no additional costs through their existing basic cable and Prime streaming services. KHN broadcast games over-the-air on KING 5, KONG and select TEGNA, Gray, Cox and Morgan Murphy TV stations, plus Prime to afford multiple options for local fans on a range of devices.

For fans outside of the Seattle region, Kraken partner TEGNA, which owns and operates the local stations, will air games on KGW in Portland and KREM in Spokane, totaling nearly 4 million households in Seattle/Portland/Spokane. Plus, games will be aired on TEGNA's KTVB in Boise. KHN has added affiliates in Juneau (KYEX) and Anchorage (KAUU) along with one in Yakima (KAPP-KVEW, ABC affiliate) and another in Eugene (KEVU-KLSR) to bolster the three-state access for the Kraken faithful.

Prime Video, of course, is available everywhere in Washington, Alaska, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. The aim is to super-size fan access to games and eliminate subscription costs across the Pacific Northwest.

If radio/audio is your jam and/or you can't be near a screen during Kraken action, anchor station Sports Radio KJR 93.3 FM and iHeart Audio Network have garnered 26 affiliate stations (seven in Alaska alone) across the three states plus parts of Idaho and Montana that are in the teams NHL-approved broadcast region. Only Minnesota and Pittsburgh have bigger radio affiliate networks.

What's more, fans are the winners beyond the expansive and highly accessible TV and radio options plus a revamped team contending for a playoff spot. On KHN, future Hall of Famer John Forslund is joined by the highly popular analysts Eddie Olczyk and J.T. Brown with equally beloved analysts Alison Lukan and Brett Festerling joining studio host Ian Furness on pre-game/intermissions/post-game "shoulder programming."

There's no overlooking KHN on-personality Piper Shaw, who conducts player interviews and backstory insights about the team during Kraken telecasts. On the radio/audio side, Everett Fitzhugh and Al Kinisky are a formidable and fun-loving duo with Mike Benton bringing a local and deep-knowledge flair to the KJR/iHeart shoulder programming.

It all adds up to a powerhouse of personalities Kraken fans get to know each game night and throughout the season. What's fun for both the fans and those personalities is how much they enjoy and admire each other. Here's a sampling of those partnerships and relationships. For more, simply tune in to KHN and KJR/iHeart every and any game night. ⚓

"I find that all great broadcasters – and Johnny is a great broadcaster – are able to include their partner or partners. You get them where they want to go and know what to ask. His work in getting up into the finest details. He keeps that detail on the tip of his tongue, or his notes, and then just adds a little nugget...it just takes it to another level."

—

EDDIE OLCZYK
on JOHN FORSLUND

"I go back to our very first meeting that we had in the iHeart offices. Al comes in for his audition. We pull up a random Kraken game. We're sitting in a studio, just doing a game on TV for 20 minutes. He leaves, and I remember talking to Rich [Moore, SVP of programming for KJR and the iHeart Audio Network]. I said, 'Man, Al has to be the guy.' It felt so natural from day one."

—

EVERETT FITZHUGH
on chemistry with analyst AL KINISKY

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BROADCAST TEAM

JOHN FORSLUND

John is play-by-play announcer for the Kraken Hockey Network. He joined the Kraken for the inaugural season in 2021 after 25 years as the mega-popular voice of the Carolina Hurricanes/Hartford Whalers, moving with the franchise when relocating to Raleigh in 1997. John has a unique connection with President of Hockey Operations Ron Francis, calling the Hockey Hall of Famer's games as a player in Hartford and Carolina, then as Carolina GM and now as a Seattle executive. Forslund is the lead voice of Prime Video's Monday Hockey Night and works national games for Turner Sports after years in an expansive role with NBC Sports, NHL on Versus and ESPN National Hockey Night.

EDDIE OLCZYK

Eddie, aka "Edzo," joined the booth for the 2022-23 season as one of the Kraken's TV color analysts. He spent the previous 15 seasons with the Chicago Blackhawks as their TV color analyst. Olczyk continues to appear on weekly national game broadcasts for TNT as the network's lead analyst. Olczyk spent 16 seasons in the NHL playing for Chicago (debuting at 18), Toronto, Winnipeg (now Arizona), New York Rangers, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh (where he was later head coach). He is a Stanley Cup winner as a player (New York Rangers 1994) and member of the United States Hockey Hall of Fame (2012).

JT BROWN

JT is a TV color analyst for all KHN broadcasts, starting with John Forslund for Seattle's inaugural season in 2021. Brown spent 11 seasons as a collegiate and professional hockey player, notching 72 points (23 goals, 49 assists) in 365 career NHL regular season games with Tampa Bay, Anaheim and Minnesota. Prior to signing with Tampa Bay as an undrafted free agent, he played two seasons with NCAA Division I University of Minnesota-Duluth Bulldogs, winning the 2011 National Championship and named the Frozen Four's Most Outstanding Player.

ALISON LUKAN

Alison joined our TV broadcast team full-time as a color analyst in 2022-23 after serving as a contracted analyst during the inaugural season. She was an instant hit with fans for her clever and easy-to-understand use of data plus deep knowledge of the sport and NHL. She is a writer and commentator for Kraken digital channels and the Kraken app. Before joining Seattle, Lukan covered the Columbus Blue Jackets and Ohio State men's and women's hockey for The Athletic and Fox Sports Ohio. She was co-leader of the 2022 SEAHAC analytics conference.

BROADCAST TEAM

BRETT FESTERLING

Brett joined the KHN studio team as an analyst last season. After his playing career, he transitioned into a hockey analyst for Vancouver (BC) sports radio. As a 6-foot-1 defenseman, he played 88 NHL games with Anaheim and Winnipeg plus 241 games with eight different American Hockey League franchises. Brett played eight seasons in Germany to finish his pro career. He was star player and captain of the Western Hockey League 2007 WHL Vancouver Giants Memorial Cup championship team.

IAN FURNESS

After 14 years as NFL Seahawks Fox 12 KCPQ reporter and a familiar radio host on 93.3 KJR radio, Ian joined KHN as the anchor for pre- and post-game coverage and intermissions for the 2024-25. Furness worked the mic for WHL teams in his early career. In 1991-92, he volunteered to do Thunderbirds pre-game and intermission work on radio, soon getting the chance to call the 1992 Memorial Cup championship game hosted by Seattle.

Ian is following in the anchor footsteps of his late father, Milt Furness, a local TV reporter and anchor at KING, KIRO and a long stint at KOMO.

EVERETT FITZHUGH

Everett, aka "Fitz," is the play-by-play announcer for the Kraken's radio broadcasts on KJR 93.3 and the iHeart Audio Network. Before stepping boldly into a lifelong dream to become an NHL broadcaster, Fitzhugh spent five seasons with Cincinnati of the ECHL, a developmental pro league for the NHL. He filled dual role as the Cyclones' director of media relations and broadcasting. His time in Cincinnati included Fitzhugh guest-broadcasting his first NHL game for the Washington Capitals plus serving on the broadcast crew for the 2018 CCM/ECHL All-Star Classic.

AL KINISKY

Al Kinisky was named color analyst for Kraken broadcasts on KJR prior for the 2023-24 season. He first came to Seattle to play for the Western Hockey League Seattle Thunderbirds in 1989 after spending a year in Northern Saskatchewan playing for the Nipawin Hawks. With the Thunderbirds he totaled 83 points (27 goals, 56 assists) in 149 regular-season games. After his playing career, Kinisky worked in the tech industry while also playing, coaching and working as color analyst for the WHL Everett Silvertips radio broadcasting team for a decade.

VISITOR 0
PENALTIES
NUMBER
TIME
46:20
1
PENALTIES
NUMBER
TIME
KRAKEN 0
DAK-NEMO END
DAK-NEMO WEST-EAST
DAK-SQUIRT END
DAK-SQUIRTEAST-WEST
CAM 14-PLAZA
CAM 8- ATRIUM
UP6
CAM 11 - NORTH
CAM 10 - CENTER ICE
UP15 LEFT OVERHEAD
UP16 RT OVERHEAD
AWAY FEED - T36
DIRTY PGM - T30
CLEAN - T31
HIGH L SLASH - T33
VIS PENALTY - T34
REV - T35
GIMBAL CAM
SOCIAL
CAM 13-STAGE
CAM 12 - SOUTH
FONT 1
FONT 2
ZELUS UP5
LOCAL TIME 18:28:40
GAME CLOCK 46:20
Hispanic Heritage Night
CAM 4 - LUIS
GAME - T21
L ROCKER - T27
SPEEDY - T28
CAM 8 - ANTHONY
CAM 4 - LUIS
PROJECTION N WALL
VISITOR 0
PENALTIES
NUMBER
TIME
46:20
1
PENALTIES
NUMBER
TIME
KRAKEN 0
CAM 1 - SANTOS
RIGHT HIN - T24
FONT 3
FONT 4
R ROCKER - T29
CAM 2 - RYAN
RED
L ANKLE - T25
R ANKLE - T26
GOLD
UP12- BEAU
CLIPS A

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COMMUNICATING WITH HEADSETS, THE KRAKEN'S GAME ENTERTAINMENT CREW PRODUCES AND DIRECTS WHAT FANS SEE AT HOME GAMES ON THE ICE, PLUS THE POPULAR TWIN VIDEO BOARDS AND 28,000 SQUARE FEET OF LED SIGNAGE. IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVING THE SPORT AND OUR PLAYERS.

BY BOB CONDOR

As fans roared approval when Kraken defenseman Brandon Montour scored his first of two third-period goals in an early-season comeback victory at Climate Pledge Arena, Caitlin Selami was already looking to inspire more ear-drenching high decibels for which Seattle sports fans are famous. After all, the Kraken were suddenly down just two goals, 3-1, with 11 minutes left in regulation.

Salemi can be found on her headset every Kraken home game hunkered down in a corner seat of the game-entertainment booth on the arena's press bridge. Top lieutenant Nicole Shabaz and public address announcer Chet Buchanan are positioned to her right. Salemi and her crew are undoubtedly a major reason why the Kraken faithful and newbie fans alike not only have a blast at home games but how and why the fans' vocal support can rev up the likes of Montour and his teammates.

Make no mistake, from captain Jordan Eberle right on through the roster, Seattle players are inspired and grateful for the deafening crowd noise that has fueled comebacks like this late October Tuesday against Montreal. Plus, the crew's work and fan decibels duly impressed former playoff standouts who are now Seattle teammates such as free agent signees Montour, Chandler Stephenson and Mason Marchment (who heard it in a visitors Dallas uniform during the second round of the 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs).

As Tuesday's game clock ticks down to six minutes remaining, Salemi has an urgent by calmly voiced question: "Is the decibel meter working?" She is thinking about her options to generate crowd noise organically.

LET'S (PLAN AND) MAKE SOME NOOOIIIISE!

"We do have tried-and-true noise meters and crowd pumps I know will always work," said Salemi on a quieter workday than the fever pitch of game nights. "But we want to keep things fresh from game to game. I am mindful of not utilizing the same noise meters over and over. For each one, some fit the moment more than others. It's on me knowing what the moment calls for."

Salemi pauses, turning her laptop to show a digital "punch list of literally all of our available noise prompts from noise meters to team pumps to movie clips to our blowfish." The prompts are all loaded into the arena's game entertainment system, which powers the mega-popular twin video boards and 28,000 square feet of LED signage inside the bowl and along the concourses.

"This [punch list] is kind of my best friend on a game night," said Salemi, smiling slightly. "It sits right next to my script. I bounce back and forth between the two to figure out, OK, what do we need in this moment? Do we need a clappy fun one just to get the crowd going? Or do we need fans to scream and make some noise? There are lot of times I'll turn to 'Shabz," saying 'what do you think fits here?' Or, say, 'Hey, EV [Eric Vaughn, Kraken director of live production and broadcast] what do you think works?'"

MASTER CONTROL ROOM: WINDOWLESS BUT PLENTY OF SCREENS

The aforementioned Vaughn sits in the arena's master control room on a restricted-access level some five stories below where Salemi is stationed. Vaughn, like Salemi, is a Kraken employee who joined the team in the months before the puck dropped on the inaugural season. He sits alongside Alex Gross, Kraken manager of live production, who calls for the mountains of game-night content appearing on the twin boards and the sweeping LED displays inside the arena. Gross has 20-something camera views from which he can select the next shots on the twin boards, including three "robo-cams" or wireless cameras manned by operators who roam for crowd shots and, when relevant, players entering the rink from the locker room tunnel.

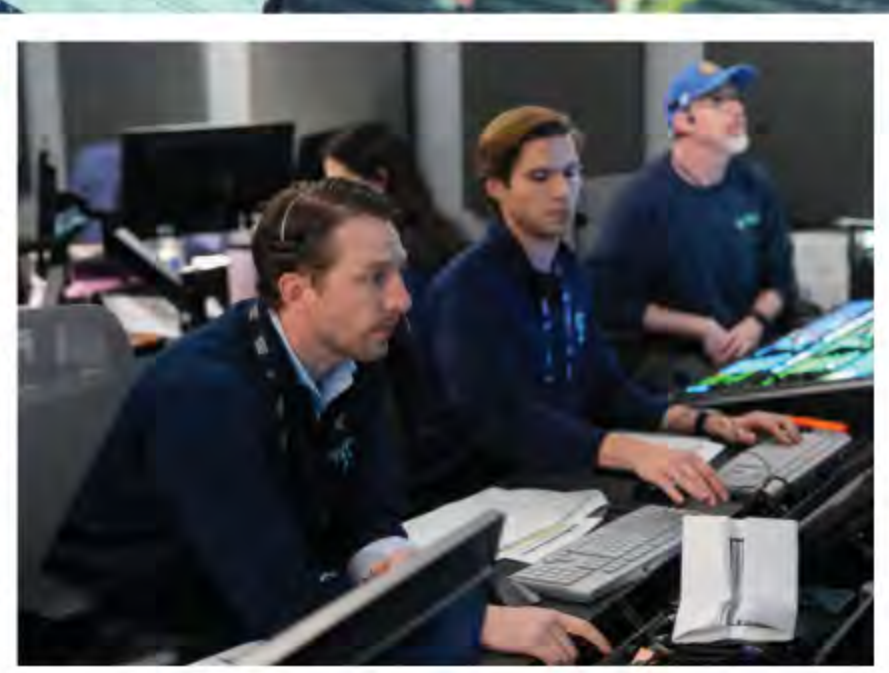
"My favorite part of the job is our purpose each game revolves around making sure people are entertained, making sure people leave with a smile," said Gross. "Maybe you've had a tough day but then we put a kid on the video boards who smiles for the first time and gets excited, it's hard not to just let go of whatever the day has thrown at you ... Same goes for younger people, older folks, middle-aged, everyone we show on the video boards."

Gross' game days actually start early, long before the 1:30 p.m. all-hands meeting to discuss the night's run of show – and sometimes even sooner than the calendar date. To say few people fully understand (save Salemi and Shabaz and Vaughn) how many details need to be addressed and organized is, well, a 'gross' understatement.

"My biggest priority is the LED displays in the building," said Gross. "That's the first thing I work on and normally the last thing I work on too. Part of it is just the amount of displays we have: 28,000 square feet of LED in and around the arena. Inside the bowl, there are three ribbons [circling} on three levels, plus the two main displays boards. In the Alaska Airlines atrium, we've got the columns, escalator walls, the Modelo bar. We can do some of the back-end work ahead of time, depending on how busy the arena is, but we always have fixing and testing to do on game days."

On top of that, Gross calls all of the camera shots that appear on the video boards along with pre-made graphics that Salemi calls for as during game action or to emphasize special game themes (such as Hispanic Heritage night or Military Appreciation Night, each of the many requiring a specialized set of branding graphics).

"It is no small feat in itself, just getting all the content in all the different computers onto the twin boards and LED [locations]," said Vaughn, who assembled the master control room with a top-notch freelancer staff from years of working Seattle Mariners and other local sports production rooms and trucks. "Everything you see on the ribbons and boards gets made by our 'MoGraph' [motion graphics] team or editing team. They deliver it here, then we download it, distribute it to all the appropriate playback devices ... Alex handles the content loading and organizing. It's a ton."



BRINGING THE 'GAME PRESENTATION' FULL CIRCLE

Vaughn is valued across the operation for his good-natured professional demeanor and deep experience at delivering whatever content needs to be pulled and loaded on the twin boards, sometimes turning around the request in mere seconds. Perhaps most effective is Vaughn's success at serving as the unified voice to Salemi and Shabaz from the master control room. Gross works on his own channel to connect with camera operators while Vaughn has one ear with the master control room crew and one with Salemi as she spins her nightly masterpieces.

"Most teams don't have a position like mine," said Vaughn. "It's common in broadcast trucks to have a director and a producer working together, but less so in game presentation. While Alex is calling cameras and focusing on the hockey [and fan reactions], I'm looking to organize replays and graphics and any fun stuff, maybe find a certain celebrity in a suite working with a robo-op [wireless camera operator] ... Caitlin is three or four steps ahead of me and I'm one or two of steps ahead of Alex so he can put up the content [on the boards] at just the right moment each time."

AMPLIFYING THE KRAKEN RALLY 'TIME'

On the late October matchup with Montreal, during a late-game timeout, Salemi chooses a video montage of famed TV/movie sports coaches from the likes of "Friday Night Lights," "Any Given Sunday" and, naturally, Team USA coach Herb Brooks from "Miracle" (played by actor Kurt Russell) with the finale sound bite, "This is our time!" The crowd instantly goes high decibels.

Soon after, Montour is chasing an puck deep in the Montreal zone and passing to Shane Wright in the high slot. Wright one-times a shot for a goal that cut the lead to 3-2 at 15:17 of the third period. Fans are full throttle, seconds later spontaneously chanting "Let's go Kraken!" as Salemi and the control room show crowd shots and replays of the goal.

During a stoppage with 2:38 remaining, Salemi is the first voice on the headset to note the Kraken net is empty. She clearly knows the sport, the first to take note of penalties and icing all game. She tells the channel, "be ready with the energy meter please" if there is a [Kraken] offensive zone faceoff break. Montour, with assists from Vince Dunn and Jaden Schwartz plus Jordan Eberle screening net-front, scores the regulation-time equalizer before the energy meter is tapped. Pure decibels of joy ensue.

WHERE IT STARTS IS WHERE WE END

The Kraken game-night entertainment show has officially won awards from relevant professional organizations, but most of all has fans talking to other fans, friends, hockey newbies, you name it. It's proper to give props and a virtual standing ovation for all participants in both the 1:30 p.m. gameday run-of-show meeting held by Salemi and the 4 p.m. camera positions meeting led by Gross, who always asks for any "good news" (one game night included a robo-cam operator happily reporting "the racoons have returned" to his yard).

But there is only place we can finish. That is with the passion for hockey that Salemi first gushed as a young girl and now pours into Kraken home nights with a calm, witty, urgent and grateful game-entertainment call. The launch point came attending one of many ECHL games with her parents while growing up in Hampton Roads, VA.

"I grew up in a hockey household," said Salemi. "When I was eight, we were at a game. I turned to my dad, asking, 'Why can't girls play?' He was like, 'they can. 'So I started playing [on boys teams with the local Juniors Admirals] and I actually played up until I got pregnant with my son [who is now 11, older brother to a six-year-old sister]."

The hockey love fully blossomed over 11 seasons with the American Hockey League Rochester Americans before Salemi earned her chance at a long-pursued opportunity at the NHL level with the Seattle expansion franchise. She started in a support role and gradually advanced to calling the game entertainment for all Kraken home this season and last.

"I simply love the sport as a whole and value the community aspect I can bring to fans each game night," said Salemi. "I really like being able to showcase our players, and bringing the fans closer to them ... The best part is I see this as my way giving back to the sport that did so much for me growing up while getting fans to fall in love with hockey too."

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FROM FRANCHISE START TO...

FINNISH

ADDING FINLAND-BORN PLAYERS TO THE KRAKEN ROSTER AND PROSPECT SYSTEM STARTED EARLY WITH THE 2021 NHL DRAFT, BUILDING EACH YEAR, INCLUDING AN ALL-TIME GREAT WAIVER CLAIM PLUS A TRADE ACQUISITION TO LAND TWO TOP-SIX FORWARDS

BY DARREN BROWN

If you've followed the Kraken since the inaugural season, you've likely noticed a steady influx of Finnish players. The relocation of Finns into Seattle started practically from Day 1 of the franchise, when Seattle selected towering right-shot defenseman Ville Ottavainen in the fourth round (No. 99 overall) of the 2021 NHL Draft.

Next came sharpshooting winger Jani Nyman (No. 49 overall) and goalie Nikke Kokko (No. 58 overall), both selected in the second round of the 2022 NHL Draft.

Since then, the population of Finnish players in the Kraken organization has continued to grow. The team famously claimed Eeli Tolvanen off waivers from the Nashville Predators in December during the 2022-23 season with Tolvanen scoring a goal in his first game for Kraken on Jan. 1, 2023. The team's Finnish elder at age 26 repeated his New Year's Day goal scoring by notching the opening goal in a 3-0 shutout of Vegas at the 2024 NHL Winter Classic at T-Mobile Park.

The Kraken acquired Kaapo Kakko in a trade with the New York Rangers in the middle of last season. Seattle drafted two more Finnish goalies, Visa Vedenpää and Kim Saarinen, plus Everett Silvertips center Julius Miettinen in recent years. Between Tolvanen and Kakko, the Kraken's top-six/top-nine forwards group includes the two Finns.

In all, more than 50 NHLers hail from Finland, and eight players in the Kraken system call Suomi home. How could such a small country with 5.5 million people produce so many NHL players and—more specifically—so many Kraken players?

"There's more and more players coming in," said Tolvanen. "They are getting bigger and bigger roles on NHL teams. One thing I say about Finns, we work pretty hard, that's what everybody's been saying. We're solid teammates and try to be always nice guys. I think it tells a lot about Finnish hockey that it's going in the right direction."

One big difference between Finnish hockey and the North American game is the ice surface. In Finland, games are played on rinks that are wider than NHL ice, though typically not as wide as traditional Olympic sheets. That extra space places more emphasis on structure of play at all levels, which prepares young Finnish players for the rigors of pro hockey once they make the jump to North America.

LAND AND RINKS OF OPPORTUNITY

Tolvanen moved from his homeland well before reaching the professional ranks, joining the Sioux City Musketeers of the United States Hockey League at age 15. He was seeking developmental opportunities in his first exposure to the North American game, encountering the smaller ice surface and learning its nuances.

"The culture, the game style, it's different here," Tolvanen said. "Smaller ice surface, way more physical. Things happen so fast, you've got to be ready all the time, with or without the puck."

Nyman, who scored three goals and three assists in 12 games with the Kraken last season and made the roster out of training camp for the first time this year, said he too noticed clear contrasts between the Finnish and North American games.

"The biggest difference, first of all, here is the game is so fast," said Nyman, who turned 21 in July. "When we're playing in Finland, it's a lot of [neutral zone] trap and a little bit more organization... But I like it a lot, playing here."

Off the ice, another big challenge awaits players making the move from Finland: the language. Tolvanen, who has spent much of his teenage and adult life in the U.S., speaks fluent English. But for younger players like Nyman and Kokko, English remains a work in progress.

"Of course, everything is different here," Nyman said. "The language the first couple months when I was playing [for AHL Coachella Valley] the first year here [was tough]. Like, how I understand the training, how I understand the systems. But if you're working on the language and you're living here, of course it's a little bit better every month, every week."

The younger Finns have been fortunate to have the support of fellow Finns in the Kraken organization. Nyman recalled Ottavainen being a big help during his first season in Coachella Valley. Nyman grew close with Kokko, who became his roommate and best friend during their time together with the Firebirds—even if Kokko wasn't the most helpful roommate.

"I lived with him, and we were doing everything together," said Nyman, laughing. "But I'm cooking and I'm cleaning. I'm doing more than him. He's just living and playing ice hockey."

'FINN-DING' A COMFORT LEVEL

Meanwhile, Ottavainen said he felt increasingly comfortable with more Finnish players at training camp. The familiarity is a boost while he and other countrymen battle for positioning on the ice and within the organization.

"It's obviously great to have Finnish guys around me," said Ottavainen, an AHL stalwart with legitimate NHL aspirations. "As I am working hard to take my game to the next level and trying to showcase my strengths, it's great to speak about it all in my native language. It helps me play my game, including the coaches saying they want me to play mean and physical down low in the defensive zone. With Kaapo here this year, it's even more comfortable this year than last year for me."

Tolvanen took in Kakko as a temporary roommate after his arrival last season. Kakko was back living with Tolvanen and his girlfriend for a month at the beginning of this season while he searched for a new apartment.

"Yeah, it was a little too long," Tolvanen recalled in jest. "No, it's always good. [Kaapo] is one of those guys, even when he stayed with us, he's helping with the dishes, taking care of our dog, and everything like that."

His fast friendship with Tolvanen helped ease the burden of a cross-country move.

"[It was] the first trade for me last year," said Kakko. "I didn't know how many things there were going to be for me, a new city. [I didn't] know anything about it, where's a good place to live, all those things. Tolvi was helping me out a lot with those things, even early this season."

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2025-26

SEATTLE KRAKEN

MATTY BENIERS

10

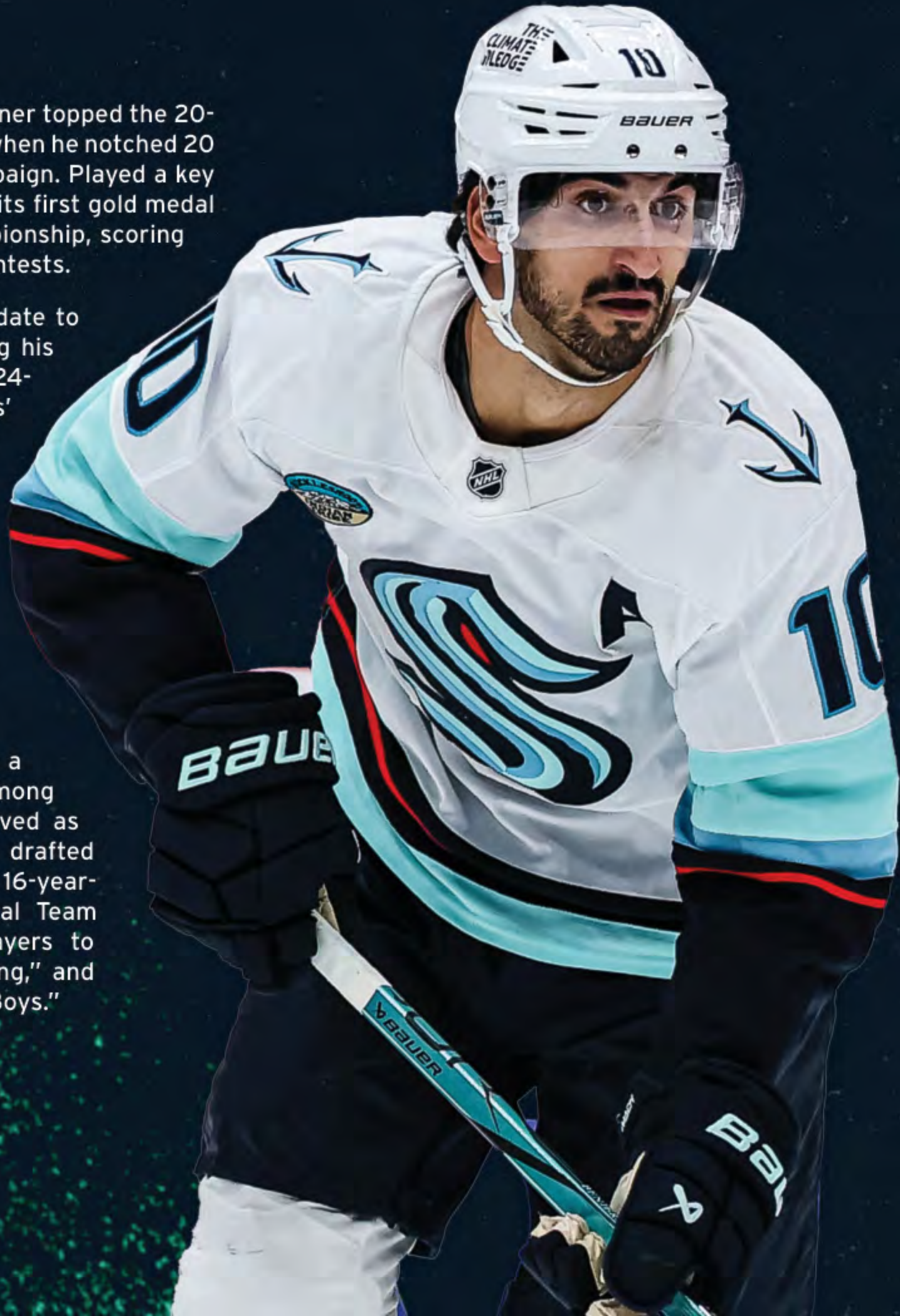
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'2" / 181 LBS	11/5/2002	HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

ABOUT MATTY: The 2023 Calder Trophy winner topped the 20-goal plateau for the second time last season when he notched 20 to go along with the 24 from his rookie campaign. Played a key role this past spring in helping Team USA to its first gold medal in 92 years at the IIHF World Hockey Championship, scoring three goals and adding three assists in 10 contests.

He'll enter his fourth full season as a candidate to center the Kraken's top line after increasing his ice-time to a career-high 18:41 per game in 2024-25 and often squaring off against opponents' top offensive threats. Known for his play in all zones, the Kraken's first ever draft pick at No. 2 overall in July 2021 consistently displays high hockey IQ and a willingness to forecheck, backcheck and play in gritty areas. Debuted with the Kraken for 10 games late in the 2021-22 season after his sophomore NCAA campaign at Michigan, tallying points in nine of those NHL contests.

FUN FACTS: Beniers' mother, Christine, is a former Broadway actress ("Chorus Line" among her credits) and now an attorney who served as a community theater director. She often drafted Matty to fill singing roles. When he was a 16-year-old newcomer to the USA Hockey National Team Development Program, coaches asked players to reveal hidden talent. Beniers said, "I can sing," and belted out a Frankie Valli tune from "Jersey Boys."



10
MATTY
BENIERS

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BERKLY CATTON

77

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	5'10" / 179 LBS	1/14/2006	SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT BERKLY: Scouts love the left-shooting center/wing's skill set and more than a few rated him even higher than his eighth overall selection by the Kraken among the 2024 NHL Draft prospects. Included in the raves: "Dynamic, dynamic skater. Elite quickness. Elite speed. Can carry, create and drive play. He can take over a game if you need him to. Pretty safe to say that he will be a second-line forward, power play guy in the NHL."

Last season, he led the Spokane Chiefs to the Western Hockey League Final, scoring 38 goals and adding 71 assists for his second straight campaign surpassing 100 points. In doing so, he was named the Canadian Hockey League's Sportsman of the Year, going to the player judged the most sportsmanlike of the 60 major junior hockey teams comprising the CHL. During his team's playoff run, he managed 42 points in 20 postseason games. He also played five games for Team Canada at the IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships, notching an assist. The prior summer in 2024, he helped Canada capture gold at the Hlinka Gretzky Cup U18 by scoring a team-high eight times in five games.

FUN FACTS: Catton has a favorite Japanese BBQ sauce by Bachan's that he uses on just about anything he eats at any meal.

77

BERKLY CATTON

Photos courtesy of GlimmerGlass

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JOEY DACCORD

35

GOALTENDER

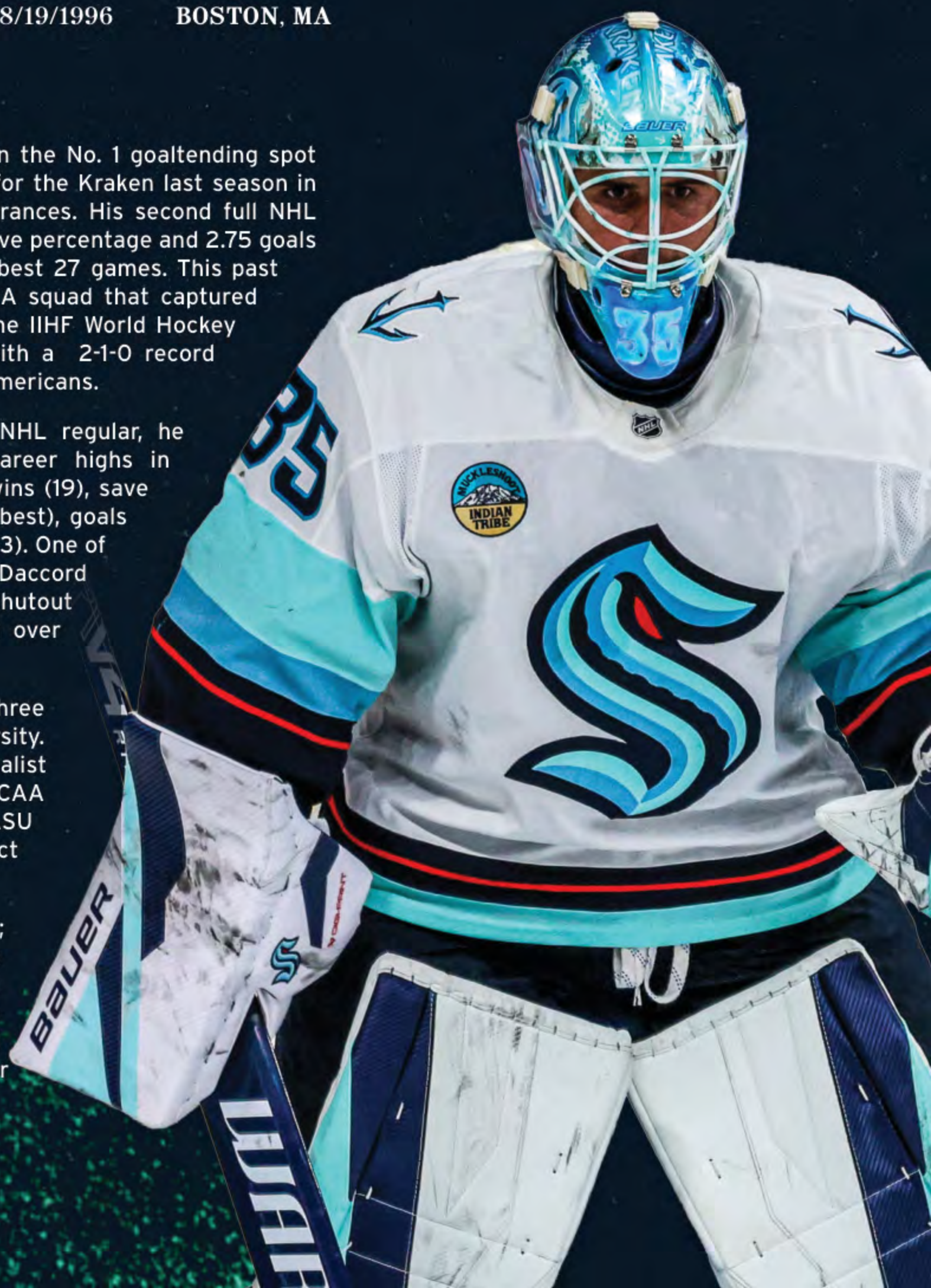
CATCHES	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'2" / 201 LBS	8/19/1996	BOSTON, MA

ABOUT JOEY: Solidified his claim on the No. 1 goaltending spot by starting a career high 55 games for the Kraken last season in addition to making two other appearances. His second full NHL campaign saw Daccord post a .906 save percentage and 2.75 goals against average in winning a career best 27 games. This past spring, he was part of the Team USA squad that captured its first goal medal in 92 years at the IIHF World Hockey Championships. Daccord finished with a 2-1-0 record with a .919 save percentage for the Americans.

In 2023-24, Daccord's first as an NHL regular, he appeared in 50 games and set career highs in games played, games started (46), wins (19), save percentage (.916, a franchise record best), goals against average (2.46) and shutouts (3). One of those shutouts came on Jan. 1 when Daccord backstopped the Kraken to the first shutout in Winter Classic history, a 3-0 win over Vegas at T-Mobile Park.

Prior to going pro, Daccord played three seasons at Arizona State University. In the 2018-19 season, he was a finalist for the Mike Richter Award (top NCAA goaltender), and he is the first ASU player to ever sign an NHL contract (Apr. 1, 2019, Ottawa).

FUN FACTS: Joey is Swiss-American; his mom was born in Switzerland. His Montreal-born father, Brian Daccord, is the director of goaltending for the Detroit Red Wings and has worked across hockey as a goalie coach for two decades.



35
JOEY DACCORD

VINCE DUNN

29

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 200 LBS	10/29/1996	MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

ABOUT VINCE: Shook off an early season injury that sidelined him a month, then rallied to score 11 goals and matched his output from the prior season. The team's first-pair defenseman has missed significant injury time the past two campaigns but remains a top offensive play generator and power play specialist when in the lineup. His last injury free campaign the team's 2022-23 playoff season saw Dunn named the Pete Muldoon Award winner as Kraken MVP, notching a career high 14 goals and setting a team record for assists and points by a defenseman with 50 and 64, respectively. His point total was second highest on the team behind winger Jared McCann. That helped Dunn secure a four-year, $29.4 million contract as a restricted free agent that runs through 2026-27.

Dunn was the team's expansion draft selection from St. Louis in July 2021, two years removed from playing top four minutes and winning a Stanley Cup with the Blues in his sophomore NHL campaign.

FUN FACTS: Dunn grew up a Maple Leafs fan just outside of Toronto and scored the overtime winner for St. Louis on the road in his first game ever at Scotiabank Arena against his boyhood favorite team. He was only playing because of a lineup vacancy created when Blues teammate Jay Bouwmeester left to attend the birth of his child. He also has scored Seattle's first goal of the season three times in five years, including this season and the first ever at Climate Pledge Arena back in 2021.

29

VINCE DUNN

JORDAN EBERLE

7

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	5'11" / 190 LBS	5/15/1990	REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT JORDAN: The veteran forward and captain joined the Kraken in the 2021 Expansion Draft, and in the 2023-24 season, Eberle celebrated his 1,000th NHL game and signed a two-year contract extension with the Kraken. During the Kraken's historic initial playoff run in 2023, Eberle was the team's second-leading scorer (six goals, five assists). Going into last season, he was named captain – a well-earned honor given his on-ice skill set in all zones and leadership qualities.

In mid-November, Eberle suffered a serious pelvis injury previously not experienced in hockey when he awkwardly slammed into the end boards during a home game. Surgery and recovery required three months with weeks not able to get out of bed. Eberle called it "the hardest thing I've ever experienced," but the captain's commitment to recovery was heralded by teammates and staff. In his return, he scored three goals and 12 assists across 25 games.

A prolific scorer in juniors for the WHL Regina Pats (same club as Kraken 2021 second-rounder Ryker Evans), Eberle was a 2008 first-round pick (22nd overall), He was a national hero in Canada for his exploits in the World Junior Championships. During a 2009 semi-final against Russia, he scored twice, including a dramatic game-tying goal with five seconds left on the clock before adding a shootout conversion in Team Canada's win.

FUN FACTS: The first NHL game Eberle ever attended was one in which he played, making his NHL debut with Edmonton in October 2010 and scoring his first NHL goal that night.

7
JORDAN
EBERLE

RYKER EVANS

41

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 195 LBS	2/13/2001	CALGARY, ALBERTA

ABOUT RYKER: The 2021 inaugural draft class member (second round, No. 35 overall) signed his next pro contract this summer, agreeing to terms of two years for $4.1 million ($2.05 AAV). Evans, 23, notched five goals and 20 assists last season while leading the Kraken defensive corps in hits with 123 and finishing third in blocked shots (106).

"Ryker took a positive step forward in his first full season in the NHL," said GM Jason Botterill said about the new contract. "Since turning pro, he's shown improvement year over year. We're confident he'll take his game to another level next season.

Prior to his time with the Kraken, Evans led the WHL in assists by a defenseman in 2021-22 (47). He then progressed to the AHL and, in a fantastic first campaign (71 GP, 6-38-44), was named to the 2023 AHL All-Rookie team while also being a high producer in the Firebirds' Western Conference title run. In his second AHL season (25 GP, 2-13-15), Evans was named as the Firebirds' All-Star representative.

FUN FACTS: Evans goes by both "Garth," his given middle name, and "Blade Boy." The latter refers to his diligence with his skate blades. Evans sends his blades back to one person in his hometown of Calgary for sharpening. He owns 35 pairs of blades that he changes every couple of games.

41

RYKER EVANS

FREDDY GAUDREAU

89

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'0" / 184 LBS	5/1/1993	BROMONT, QUEBEC

ABOUT FREDDY: Acquired via a June trade sending the Kraken's 2025 fourth-round draft pick to Minnesota, the 32-year-old has played with Kraken forwards Jared McCann (2020-21 in Pittsburgh) and Eeli Tolvanen (2017 to 2020 with Nashville and AHL affiliate Milwaukee). Unlike these former and present teammates, both first-rounders, Gaudreau was undrafted despite totaling 40 points (19 goals, 21 assists) in his final 36 regular-season games and starring in the Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League playoffs with 10 goals and four assists in 11 games.

Gaudreau made his NHL debut with Nashville late in the 2016-17 season. He subsequently signed with Pittsburgh on a one-year deal, then a two-year contract with the Wild, who re-signed Gaudreau in 2023 to a five-year deal with an average annual value of $2.1 million. The Kraken forward has three years remaining on that contract. Kraken GM Jason Botterill said the beloved veteran's versatility to play center or wing made the trade attractive, along with elite penalty-killing and a respected, involved presence in the locker room.

FUN FACTS: After just nine NHL regular-season games, Gaudreau scored three goals in the 2017 Stanley Cup Final against Pittsburgh, including game-winners in both Games 3 and 4 in a series that Pittsburgh won in seven games. Both game-winning goals were scored at home, turning Gaudreau into an instant fan favorite.

89

FREDDY GAUDREAU

PHILIPP GRUBAUER

31

GOALTENDER

CATCHES	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'1" / 188 LBS	11/25/1991	ROSENHEIM, GERMANY

ABOUT PHILIPP: The "German Gentleman" struggled last season, posting a. 875 save percentage in 26 appearances. He eventually went for an AHL stint with Coachella Valley in February in an attempt to regain rhythm and timing after a prolonged stretch of inactivity. Upon his return, he went 3-2-0 with a .915 save percentage from March 8 through season's end. Grubauer continued his strong play at the IIHF World Championship, going 2-1-0 with a 2.02 goals against average and .930 save percentage in four outings for Team Germany. He has been made a preliminary selection for the German squad at February's upcoming 2026 Olympic Winter Games Milano/Cortina, Italy.

Grubauer in 2023 had a Kraken postseason that was exactly what the team's brain trust had in mind when signing him on the first day of 2021 NHL free agency. He made huge saves throughout a 2-1 Game 7 upset win over the Colorado Avalanche in the opening round. In the second round, Grubi and his teammates nearly pulled a second straight upset, falling 2-1 in a Game 7 against Dallas. The German-born goaltender came to North America in 2008 to play juniors in the Ontario Hockey League. He was drafted in the 2010 fourth round by Washington and part of Cup-winning goalie tandem in 2018.

FUN FACTS: Grubauer has created a deep connection with SAFE (Save a Forgotten Equine), a horse rescue facility in Redmond, WA, prompting him to spend most of his off seasons in Seattle.

31
PHILIPP
GRUBAUER

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JOHN HAYDEN

15

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'3" / 223 LBS	2/14/1995	CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ABOUT JOHN: Continued to bring a needed physical presence during 20 appearances for the Kraken last season, his most since joining the organization in 2022-23. Despite playing in fewer than a quarter of the Kraken's games, his 31 penalty minutes tied for seventh most on the team while his average of 1.55 minutes per contest was the highest. Was rewarded with a two-year, $1.5 million contract extension worth $775,000 AAV. It is also the first time he's been given a one-way contract by the Kraken, meaning he will earn the same money whether playing in the NHL or AHL.

Hayden has been a key member of AHL Coachella Valley, especially during their deep runs to the Calder Cup championship round in 2023 and 2024. Last season, he again provided a veteran Firebirds presence with 11 goals and 16 assists in only 44 games. Hayden spent much of January with the Kraken, scoring his first NHL goal in nearly two years on Jan. 20 to spark a 6-4 win over Buffalo. He then rejoined the Kraken on March 8 for the duration of the regular season, after which he was returned to the Firebirds for the AHL playoffs. Hayden scored a pair of playoff goals for Coachella Valley in six postseason contests before the team's second round elimination.

FUN FACTS: Hayden graduated in 2017 from Yale University, where he majored in political science.

15

JOHN HAYDEN

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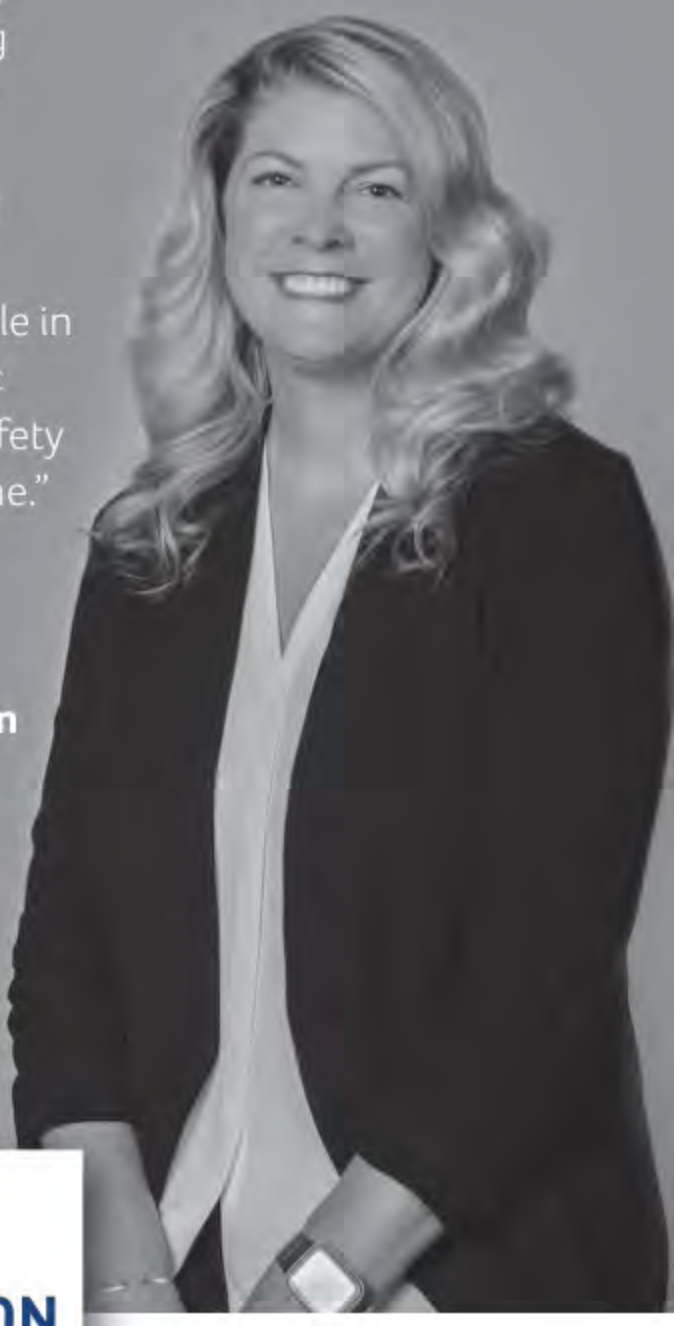

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To learn more, or to support our work, please visit www.lamberthouse.org

OSCAR FISKER MOLGAARD 78

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 168 LBS	2/18/2005	HJORRING, DENMARK

ABOUT OSCAR: The Kraken 2023 second-rounder (No. 52 overall) made his NHL debut as a 20-year-old, tallying his first assist in the Nov. 20 road game at Chicago with his mother, Trine Fisker, and, father, Lars Molgaard in attendance after a 30-hour home-to-arena journey from Denmark. He enjoyed a banner year in 2024-25, starting with a solid season with his club, HV71, Jönköping, in Sweden's top pro league. He scored five goals and added 14 assists for 19 points in 38 games, facing foes five to 10 years older. At AHL Coachella Valley, he greatly impressed Firebirds head coach Derek Laxdal, posting two goals and an assist in seven games.

However, the best was the last game Molgaard played before the summer offseason, starring for the host nation Denmark at the IIHF Men's Championship. After losing their first three games, the Danes rattled off five straight wins in the qualifying round, topping it with an upset of Canada. Molgaard has racked up a goal and six assists, none timelier than sending a stretch pass that he bounced off the end-boards, so the puck landed on countryman Nikolaj Ehlers' stick blade for a late-tying goal that allowed Denmark to win in a shootout and qualify for the quarterfinals.

FUN FACTS: Molgaard's dad, Lars, played 15 years of professional hockey, often alongside Todd Bjorkstrand, the former Kraken forward and Oliver's dad.

78
OSCAR FISKER MOLGAARD

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CALE FLEURY

8

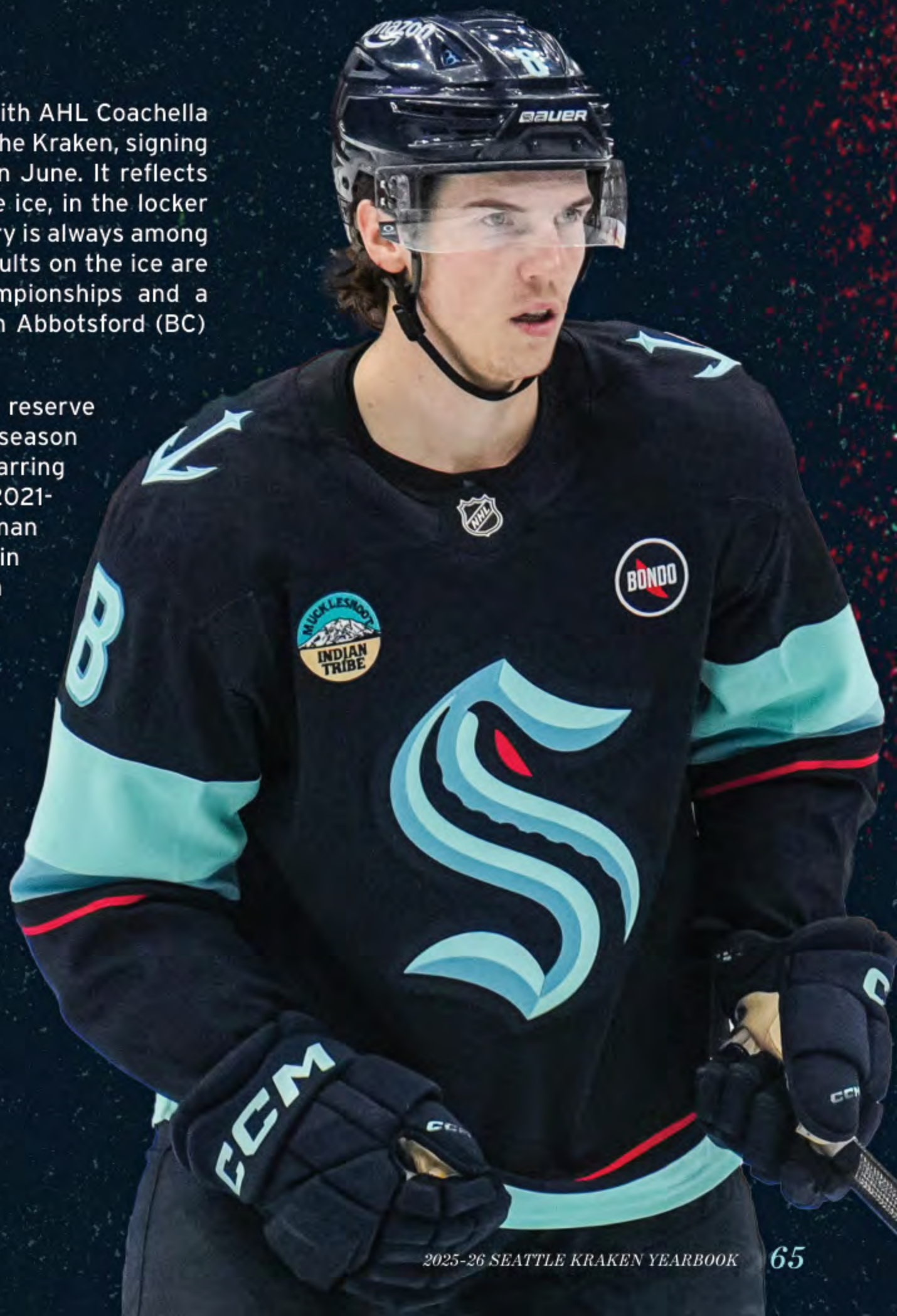
DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'1" / 204 LBS	11/19/1998	CARLYLE, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT CALE: The highly influential leader with AHL Coachella Valley was extended for two more years with the Kraken, signing a $890,000 average annual value contract in June. It reflects on the 26-year-old's role-model status on the ice, in the locker room and during team workouts in which Fleury is always among the hardest, most dedicated workers. The results on the ice are indisputable: Two Western Conference championships and a hard second-round out last spring against an Abbotsford (BC) squad that won the AHL Calder Cup.

Fleury equally serves as a prepared, poised reserve defenseman for Seattle, logging 15 games last season and rarely missing an assignment. After starring for a split-squad AHL Charlotte during the 2021-22 season, he served as a reserve defenseman on the Kraken roster, appearing in 12 games in 2022-23. Fleury spent the 2023-24 season with Coachella Valley, providing a mentoring presence along with logging seven goals and 26 assists during the regular season and an outstanding postseason output of five goals and nine assists in 18 games as the Firebirds repeated as Western Conference champions.

FUN FACTS: In the Kraken's inaugural season, as Seattle's expansion draft pick from Montreal in 2021, Cale joined brother Haydn (choice from Carolina) on a competitive team for the first time. (A two-year age difference never provided that opportunity, coming up the youth hockey ranks).



8 CALE FLEURY

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KAAPO KAKKO

84

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'1" / 215 LBS	2/13/2001	TURKU, FINLAND

ABOUT KAAPO: Known for his spectacular puck skills and strength along the boards, Kakko was selected second overall in the 2019 draft by the New York Rangers and immediately made the jump directly to the NHL from his native Finland. In his first six NHL seasons, all in New York, the winger scored 61 goals and added 70 assists in 330 games. After joining the Kraken via trade in December 2024, the now-24-year-old was given an opportunity to contribute in a top-six role as well as on the power play, and he immediately became an impactful offensive contributor. Kakko scored 10 goals and 20 assists in 49 games, setting career highs for assists (30) and points (44) in the process. His point per game pace with Seattle (2.15) was the highest of his NHL career. Kakko has represented Finland at various international tournaments, contributing to his country's victory in the 2019 IIHF World Championship with two goals and three assists in seven games.

FUN FACTS: Kakko is the youngest player in hockey history to win gold in all three IIHF world championship tournaments: the World U18 Championships, the World Junior Championships, and the World Championships.

84

KAAPO KAKKO

TYE KARTYE

12

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'1" / 204 LBS	4/30/2001	CARLYLE, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT TYE: The Kraken signed forward Tye as an undrafted free agent in March 2022 based on his stellar career with the OHL Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds. Kartye was long on Seattle's radar and invited to the team's first training camp in 2021. Kartye started as a fourth-line wing with AHL affiliate Coachella Valley in 2022 and was elevated to the Firebirds' top line by playoff time. When Kraken's leading scorer, Jared McCann, was hurt in Game 4 of the first-round 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs series with Colorado, Kartye was called up. The 22-year-old scored his first NHL playoff goal on his first NHL shot.

By New Year's Day 2023, Kartye had notched four goals and ten assists in the first half of the AHL season. He then notched 43 points in 43 games to become AHL Rookie of the Year. During his first full NHL season in 2023-24, Kartye scored 20 points (11-9-20) in 77 games and set a franchise record in hits with 229. Last season, Kartye was second in hits among Kraken teammates with 175 hits in 63 games, along with six goals and seven assists.

FUN FACTS: Kartye experienced a 100-game season in 2022-23 - 72 AHL regular season, 18 of the CVF's 25 playoff games, and 10 NHL postseason contests with the Kraken.

12

TYE KARTYE

ADAM LARSSON

6

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'3" / 207 LBS	11/12/1992	SKELLEFTEA, SWEDEN

ABOUT ADAM: Larsson joined the Kraken as a free agent ahead of the 2021 Expansion Draft and signed a contract extension last summer that will keep him in Seattle through the 2028-29 season. That is good news for Kraken fans, as the alternate captain has been a rock-solid stalwart from day one in Seattle and is always in the top three on the roster in time on ice per game (21:11 last year). Known for his shutdown defense, Larsson has prospered in Seattle on offense with 27 goals in his first four seasons of play and the second most assists of his career last season (27), Larsson has sneaky-good skating ability that is not common among players of his size, says his defense-pair partner Vince Dunn.

Adam is one of three Kraken notables selected at No. 4 overall, going to New Jersey in 2011. Younger teammate Shane Wright was picked Seattle at No. 4 in 2022 by Ron Francis, who, yes, is the third Kraken member to be a No. 4 overall pick. The Hartford Whalers (now Carolina Hurricanes) tabbed Francis in 1981.

Off the ice, Larsson earns his fan-favorite status honestly. He's known for his trademark deep-V base layer shirt, the endearing nickname "Big Cat," and initiating – and being the brunt of – team practical jokes.

FUN FACTS: The only player to appear in all 82 games in both the first and second seasons for Seattle, Larsson has missed just one game in his four years as a Kraken and that was for a very good reason: the birth of his first child.

6

ADAM LARSSON

RYAN LINDGREN

55

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 194 LBS	2/11/1998	BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA

ABOUT RYAN: Growing up in hockey-mad Minnesota, the free-agent signee defenseman experienced not only the northern state's rite of passage to begin skating as a toddler, but, like it or not, he was tested early as a goaltender. His dad played the position and so did his older brothers, including Charlie, who plays for the Washington Capitals. The debut at age 5 ended with 10 goals allowed, and "I laid out on the ice crying," says Ryan.

Let's agree that it is good fortune as the 27-year-old NHL D-man has already played in more than 400 NHL regular-season games (most frequently with star defenseman Adam Fox), plus another 50 playoff contests with the New York Rangers and Colorado (moved at the 2025 trade deadline) in his first six NHL seasons. The former NCAA Minnesota star was a standout in two deep NYR playoff runs in 2022 and 2024. One carryover from his family in net: He looks to support his goalies by blocking shots (593 over six seasons, ranking top 25 percent among NHL defenders) and pledging to be all-in clearing the Kraken end's net-front ("where the goals are scored").

FUN FACTS: Lindgren was hyped to re-connect with ex-NYR teammate Kaapo Kakko: "Kaapo is one of my favorite guys I played with in my career, just such a good dude, hard-working, everyone loves him."

55

RYAN LINDGREN

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JOSH MAHURA

28

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 193 LBS	5/5/1998	ST. ALBERT, ALBERTA

ABOUT JOSH: The 27-year-old defenseman joined the Kraken last season after winning the 2024 Stanley Cup with the Florida Panthers. Expected to provide defensive depth as an extra blueliner in 2024-25, he secured a full-time spot on the third pairing following the December trade of Will Borgen and went on to appear in 64 games. This season, he proved formidable early season with Ryker Evans sidelined for six weeks. He scored his first goal in nearly three seasons on a goal-of-the-year candidate overtime winner in Toronto (same arena as three years ago) on the team's first road trip.

Following last season, Mahura signed a two-year, $1.815 million contract to remain with the Kraken after inking a one-year pact with them the summer prior. In his final season with the Panthers, Mahura was limited to just 30 regular season games due to injury. In 2022-23, the St. Albert, AB, native played in all 82 games of the NHL season and set career highs in goals (four), assists (12) and points (16). Mahura played three seasons in the AHL (2018-21), where he appeared in 112 games and registered 60 points (11-49-60) and was named to the 2020-21 AHL All-Star roster.

FUN FACTS: Mahura got his nickname, "Muzz" from a junior hockey coach who simply enjoyed calling him that. The name has stuck for more than 10 years.

28
JOSH
MAHURA

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MITCHELL STEPHENS

67

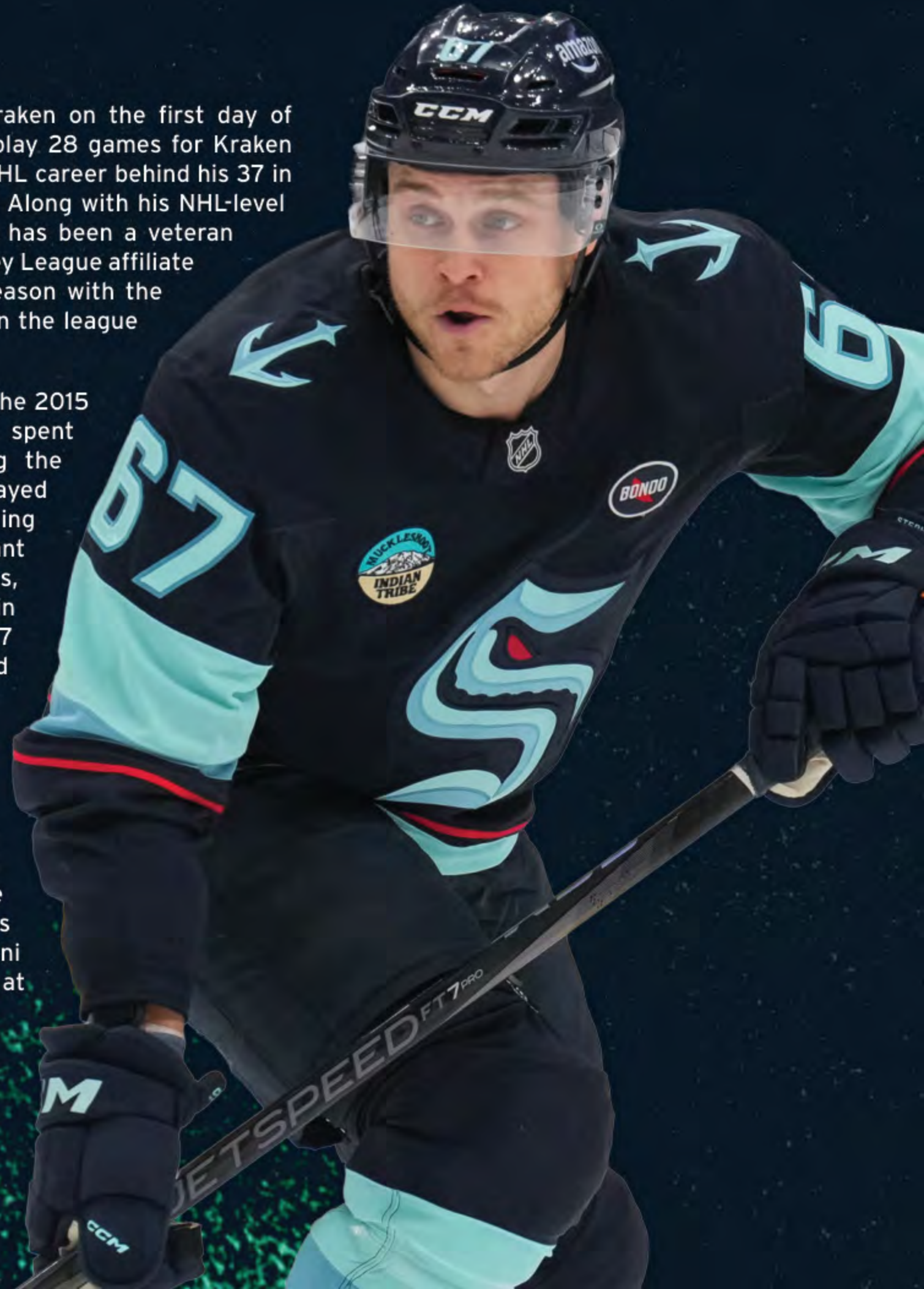
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'0" / 203 LBS	2/5/1997	PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

ABOUT MITCHELL: Signed with the Kraken on the first day of 2024 NHL free agency and went on to play 28 games for Kraken in the 2024-25, the second most of his NHL career behind his 37 in debuting with Tampa Bay five years ago. Along with his NHL-level contributions, the 28-year-old Stephens has been a veteran leader and role model for American Hockey League affiliate Coachella Valley, most especially this season with the Firebirds ranking as the youngest team in the league at a 22.3 average.

Selected by TBL in the second round of the 2015 NHL Draft (No. 33 overall), Stephens spent six years in the AHL before cracking the NHL with Tampa Bay in 2019-20. He played another seven games with the Lightning the following season but missed significant time due to injury the next two seasons, one with Detroit. He spent two years in the Montreal organization, appearing in 27 games for the Canadiens in 2023-24 and serving as an alternate captain with AHL Laval Rocket.

FUN FACTS: In his debut NHL season with Tampa Bay, Stephens was away during the COVID-19 "bubble" playoffs when his now-wife, Emma, was staying by herself at a Tampa hotel during the Canadian border shutdown. She was invited by former Kraken fan favorite Yanni Gourde and his wife, Anne-Marie, to stay at their second home in Florida.



67

MITCHELL STEPHENS

JARED McCANN

19

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'1" / 191 LBS	5/31/1996	STRATFORD, ONTARIO

ABOUT JARED: Started the season with three early goals, but the hot streak was halted by an upper-body injury. He enters the season holding just about every significant Kraken franchise scoring record, including 118 goals, 243 points, 28 power play goals, six shorthanded goals, 10 game winning goals (tied with Jordan Eberle), most goals in a season with 40 and most points in a season with 70. McCann has led the team in points all four years of its history, doing so again last season by notching 61. He is the only multiple winner of the Pete Muldoon Award for team MVP, in the Kraken's inaugural 2022-23 season and again in 2023-24. McCann's 40-goal season in 2022-23 led the NHL in even-strength goals per 60 minutes (1.85) .

Last season, the Kraken original played in all 82 games for the first time in his career, scoring 22 goals and adding 39 assists. The 29-year-old was the first Seattle player to agree to an extension when he signed on for an additional five years in March 2022.

FUN FACTS: "Canner" changed his number prior to the 2022-2023 season from 16 to 19. No superstition involved, just a favorite number that McCann wore with OHL Sault Ste. Marie, the same club for which Kraken executive Ron Francis was a legendary player. There are lots of cute dogs among Seattle players, but McCann's corgi, Cheddar, has some 7,500 followers on Instagram.

19

JARED McCANN

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JACOB MELANSON

63

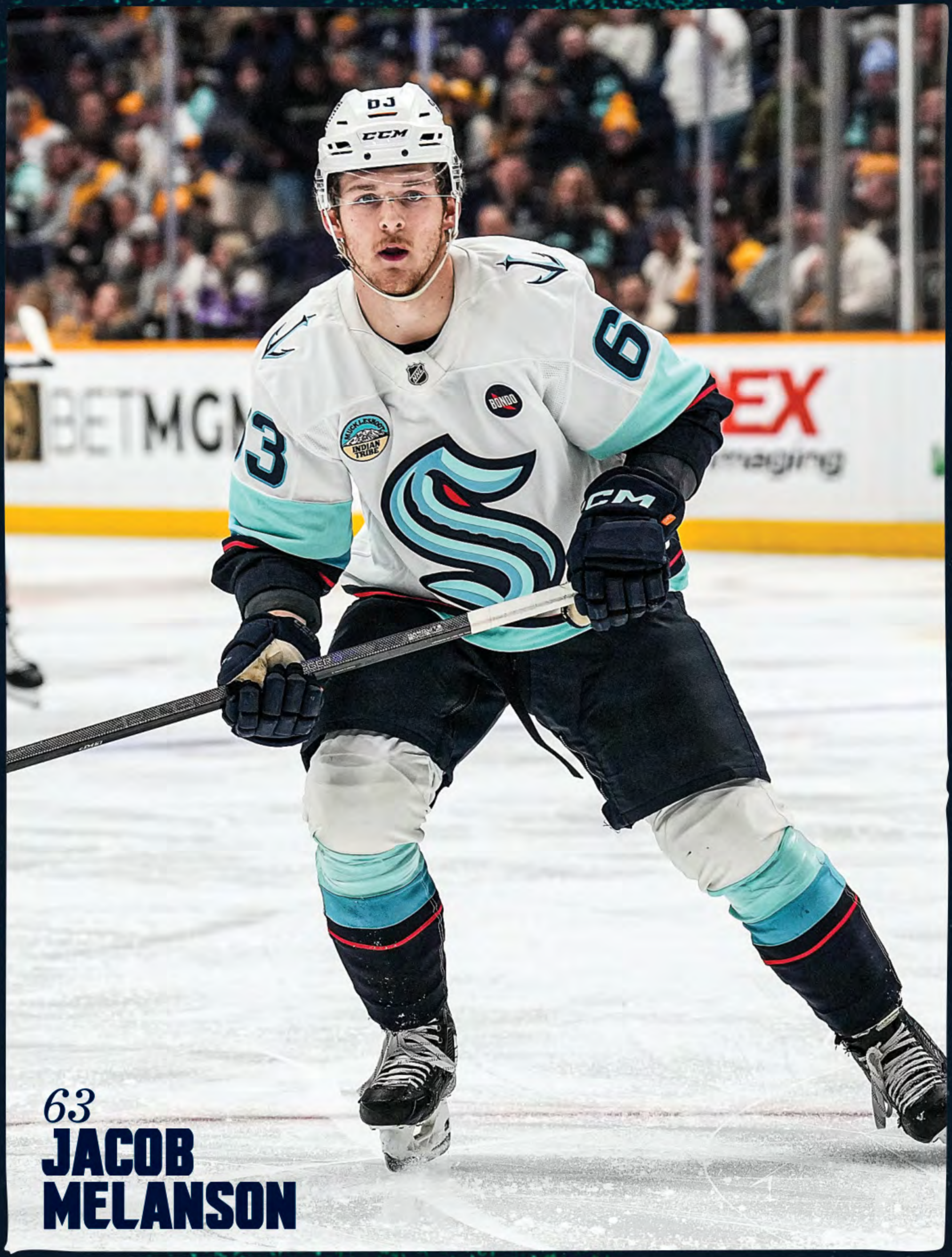
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'0" / 207 LBS	4/22/2003	HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

ABOUT JACOB: Yet another success story from the Kraken's inaugural NHL Draft, 2021 fifth-rounder Melanson made his NHL debut against Nashville last March, delivering the physical-in-all-zones play that has marked his pro career. The call-up came following a strenuous rehab period to recover from a broken leg. He started last season looking like the rugged forward with a scoring touch that made him one of the last cuts during the 2024 training camp.

His play for AHL Coachella Valley down the regular-season stretch run and 2025 postseason (goal and two assists in six games plus annoying any number of foes) places the 22-year-old in the mix as a depth forward on the Kraken roster/call-up sheet. His scrappy, defensively responsible game is appreciated across Seattle hockey operations, and no one overlooks his capacity to generate scoring chances and goals. Melanson's 2023-24 AHL rookie season featured a rise in playing time and six goals and 12 assists over 62 games, followed by regular minutes on a checking line (goal, two assists) for a Firebirds squad that won the Western Conference title.

FUN FACTS: He played four seasons developing his game in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, the last one with Acadie-Bathurst Titan and Sherbrooke Phoenix (traded midseason), generating 50 goals (25 for each franchise) in 59 games, good for fourth most in the "Q."



63

JACOB MELANSON

DARREN DREGER

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BEN MEYERS

59

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	5'11" / 194 LBS	1/15/1998	DELANO, MINNESOTA

ABOUT BEN: The Kraken signed the former NCAA star on July 1, 2024, to a one-year, one-way contract (AAV $775,000). He was a force for AHL Coachella Valley, leading the team with 51 points, including 23 goals and 28 assists in 59 games. His stellar two-way game was an ideal game for younger Firebirds to model, plus it prompted the Kraken to call him up for eight NHL games.

Before joining the Seattle organization, Meyers split time between Colorado and Anaheim (traded to the latter in exchange for a 2024 fifth-round draft choice) during the 2023-24 season, appearing in 23 NHL games. He has played an additional 43 regular games for the Avalanche from 2021 to 2023, plus six of the seven games in which the Kraken ousted the defending champions in the first round of the 2023 Stanley Cup Playoffs.

Meyers was the 2021-22 Big 10 Player of the Year and a Hobey Baker Award finalist after captaining his team to a conference championship and scoring 41 points (17 G, 24 A) in 34 games. He represented the USA at the 2022 Winter Olympics (2 G, 2 A in four games; teammate with Matty Beniers).

FUN FACTS: Won a USHL Clark Cup championship with Fargo (ND) in 2018 after a legendary career in highly competitive Minnesota high school hockey, including one season averaging four points per game.

59

BEN MEYERS

HENRIQUE MONTOUR FOUNDATION

The Henrique Montour Foundation was founded by **Brandon Montour** and **Adam Henrique**, NHL players who share a deep appreciation for the communities that helped shape their journeys. Built on a commitment to give back, the Foundation supports opportunities for youth and families across Brant and Six Nations—places both founders proudly call home.

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The Henrique Montour Foundation | henriquemontourfoundation

BRANDON MONTOUR

62

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'0" / 199 LBS	4/11/1994	BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

ABOUT BRANDON: Montour signed as a free agent with the Kraken in July 2024, fresh off a Stanley Cup win, to deliver a record scoring season for Seattle defensemen with a personal career-high of 18 goals. He continued to turn heads at the 2025 IIHF Men's World Championship in Denmark and Sweden with two goals and seven assists for nine points in eight games, tops for all defensemen in the tournament. Team Canada's brass was clearly impressed, inviting Montour to his home country's Olympic orientation camp in August.

The offensively-minded defender is equally considered elite as a defender, one who can contribute in three zones and play big minutes in all situations. He led the Kraken in time on ice last season with 23 minutes per game, followed by Vince Dunn (22:05) and Adam Larsson (21:11). Teammate and fellow 2024 free-agent signee Chandler Stephenson refers to "Monty' as "a horse who never gets tired." As a testament to his endurance, the D-man logged 57:56 of ice time in Game 1 of the 2023 Eastern Conference Finals against the Carolina Hurricanes, which lasted four overtimes.

FUN FACTS: Montour is of Mohawk descent from the Six Nations of the Grand River in Canada. He grew up in Ohsweken, a village inside Six Nations, where more than 20,000 people showed up for Montour's day with the Stanley Cup in July 2024.

62
BRANDON
MONTOUR

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MATT MURRAY

30

GOALTENDER

CATCHES	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'5" / 220 LBS	5/25/1994	THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO

ABOUT MATT: Signed to a one-year deal on Day 1 of this summer's free agency, looks to resurrect a strong NHL career derailed by injury. Murray leapfrogged to stardom at age 21 with Pittsburgh in 2016, starring in a Stanley Cup title run and compiling a 15-6 postseason record with a .923 save percentage. The following season, in a goaltending tandem with Marc-Andre Fleury, Murray went 32-10-4 with a 2.41 GAA and .923 SVP and was poised to start the playoffs. But Murray was injured in warmups of the playoff opener and didn't return until replacing Fleury in Game 3 of the Eastern Conference final. Murray led the Pens to their second consecutive title, beating Nashville in the final, shutting the Predators out in Games 5 and 6, totaling a zeros-streak of 146:52.

Murray was traded to Ottawa in 2020, then dealt to Toronto ahead of the 2022-23 season. He appeared in only 26 games after series of injuries, subsequently missing all of 2023-24 due to bi-lateral hip surgery. He returned last season, appearing in two regular season games and one playoff contest for the Maple Leafs plus 21 contests for the AHL Toronto Marlies.

FUN FACTS: Hails from Thunder Bay in northwest Ontario, the same forestry and mining town as new Kraken goaltending coach Colin Zulianello. No. 1 goalie for Ron Francis and Jason Botterill when they co-managed Team Canada's silver medalist squad at the 2019 Men's Worlds.

30
MATT
MURRAY

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JANI NYMAN

38

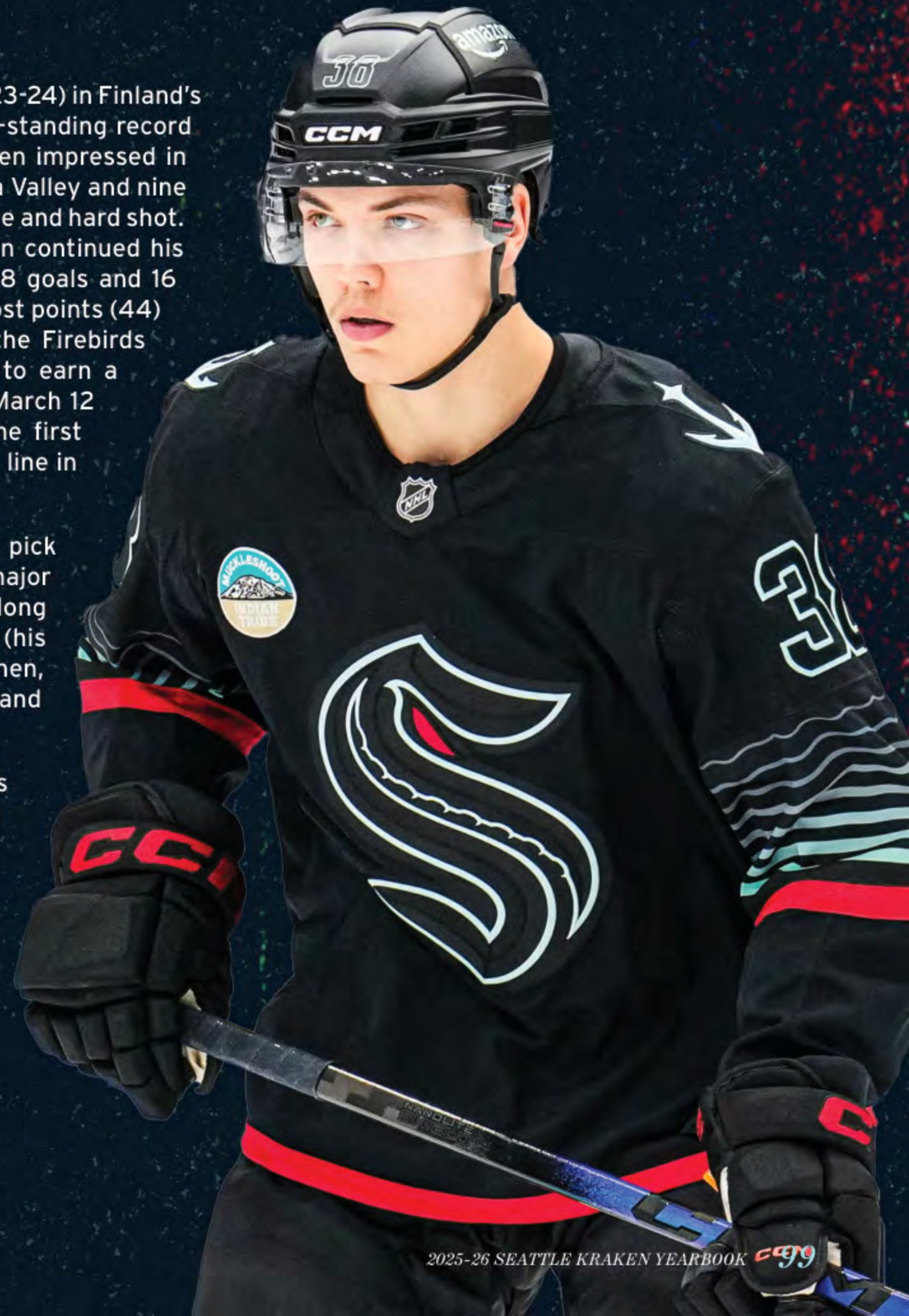
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'2" / 212 LBS	7/30/2004	VALKEAKOSKI, FINLAND

ABOUT JANI: Completed his final season (2023-24) in Finland's top pro league, Liiga, by breaking a 40-years-standing record of most goals (26) by an under-20 player, then impressed in five regular season games with AHL Coachella Valley and nine playoff games, especially his net-front presence and hard shot. In his first full season in the Firebirds, Nyman continued his eye-popping progress, scoring a team-high 28 goals and 16 assists in 58 games – good enough for 10th most points (44) by an AHL rookie and second most across the Firebirds roster. That performance was good enough to earn a call-up to the Kraken; in his first NHL game March 12 with his parents in attendance, he scored the first goal of his NHL career. He put up a 3-3-6 stat line in 12 games.

Seattle selected Nyman with the 49th overall pick in the 2022 NHL Draft. He figures to be a major contributor in the Kraken organization, along with fellow Finnish prospects, Nikke Kokko (his CVF roommate as AHL rookies), Ville Ottavainen, Julius Miettinen with "elders" Eeli Tolvanen and Kaapo Kokko.

FUN FACTS: North American announcers covering World Junior games have called Jani both "Nu-man" and "Knee-man." Not surprising because in Finnish, the pronunciation quickly rolls the vowel sounds: "Knee-ooh-man." Jani himself is good with "Nu-man."



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JANI NYMAN

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JAMIE OLEKSIAK

24

DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'7" / 252 LBS	12/21/1992	TORONTO, ONTARIO

ABOUT JAMIE: Joining the Kraken as a free agent in 2021, his contract counted as the Kraken's expansion pick from Dallas. He has proven to be a defender who can pair up with a variety of partners, teaming with Brandon Montour upon his arrival in Seattle last season and working alongside Josh Mahura and Ryker Evans this season. Known as a reliable, physical, consistent defenseman, Oleksiak has also chipped in offensively. He set career bests in goals (nine), assists (16), and points (25) in 2022-23 and has added 13 or more assists each of his four seasons with Seattle. Last year, his .31 primary assists per 60 minutes of play was the second highest rate of his career. With Dallas, he had two different runs sandwiched around a season and a half with Pittsburgh. In the 2020 Stanley Cup playoffs, he helped the Stars reach the Stanley Cup Final. Prior to professional play, Oleksiak starred at NCAA Northeastern, prompting his selection at No. 14 overall first round of the 2011 NHL Draft. He was called up to make his NHL debut with the Stars in 2013.

FUN FACTS: Jamie played three full seasons in Dallas' American Hockey League affiliate, the Austin-based Texas Stars, playing for then-head coach Derek Laxdal, who is now in the same role leading the Coachella Valley Firebirds.

24

JAMIE OLEKSIAK

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VILLE OTTAVAINEN

46

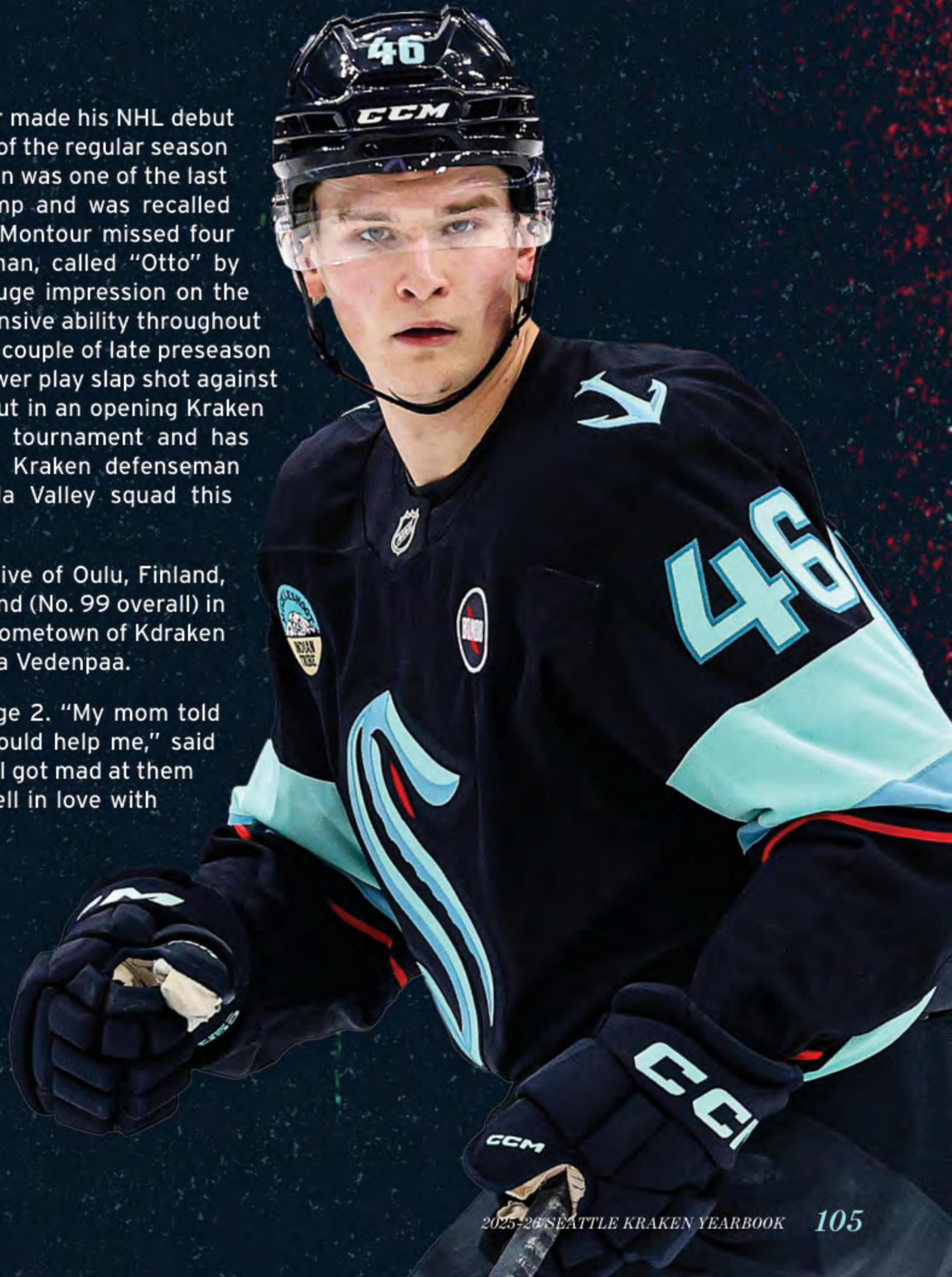
DEFENSEMAN

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'5" / 210 LBS	8/12/2002	OULU, FINLAND

ABOUT VILLE: The XL-sized defender made his NHL debut on an emergency basis the final night of the regular season last April, tallying an assist. Ottavainen was one of the last roster cuts in this fall's training camp and was recalled on the first road trip when Brandon Montour missed four games due to family leave. The D-man, called "Otto" by players and coaches alike, made a huge impression on the Kraken with his physical play and offensive ability throughout 2024 training camp as well, earning a couple of late preseason games and scoring on a one-timed power play slap shot against the Calgary Flames. He was a standout in an opening Kraken victory at the 2024 Rookie Faceoff tournament and has proven a veteran presence for four Kraken defenseman prospects joining the AHL Coachella Valley squad this season.

The right-shooting 23-year-old, a native of Oulu, Finland, was taken by Seattle in the fourth round (No. 99 overall) in the 2021 NHL Draft. Oulu is also the hometown of Kdraken goalie prospects Nikke Kokko and Visa Vedenpaa.

FUN FACTS: Ottavainen skated by age 2. "My mom told me every time I fell down, nobody could help me," said Ottavainen, laughing at the memory. "I got mad at them if they even tried to help me. I just fell in love with skating and hockey right away."



46 VILLE OTTAVAINEN

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JADEN SCHWARTZ

17

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	5'10" / 185 LBS	6/25/1992	WILCOX, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT JADEN: Veteran forward led all Kraken scorers with 26 goals last season and ranked third in overall points (49) while appearing in 81 games, the most of any NHL regular season he has played. In 2024-25, the Kraken alternate captain surpassed NHL benchmarks of more than 200 goals and 300 assists for his career. Signed by the Kraken on July 1, 2021, from St. Louis, where he led the Blues in playoff goals during the team's Stanley Cup championship in 2019.

After an injury-plagued year during the inaugural season, the 2010 first-round pick rebounded with 21 goals in the 2022-23 season, plus five goals and five assists in the 2023 playoffs, to rank third among Kraken scorers for a squad that nearly qualified for the Western Conference final. Schwartz' net-front frequency and in-the-corners grit is frequently cited by Kraken GM Jason Botterill when he talks about "strength" being less about size and more about toughness and tenacity. Fans watching him closely will see he frequently makes the initial play to get the puck to teammates who pick up the assists and goal credits.

FUN FACTS: Family matter: Schwartz's brother played on hockey travel teams with teammate Jordan Eberle's brother. Both players are Saskatchewan natives, as is new teammate and summer free-agent signee Chandler Stephenson. One of the funniest and fun-loving guys on the squad as cited frequently by teammates and coaches.

17

JADEN SCHWARTZ

CHANDLER STEPHENSON

9

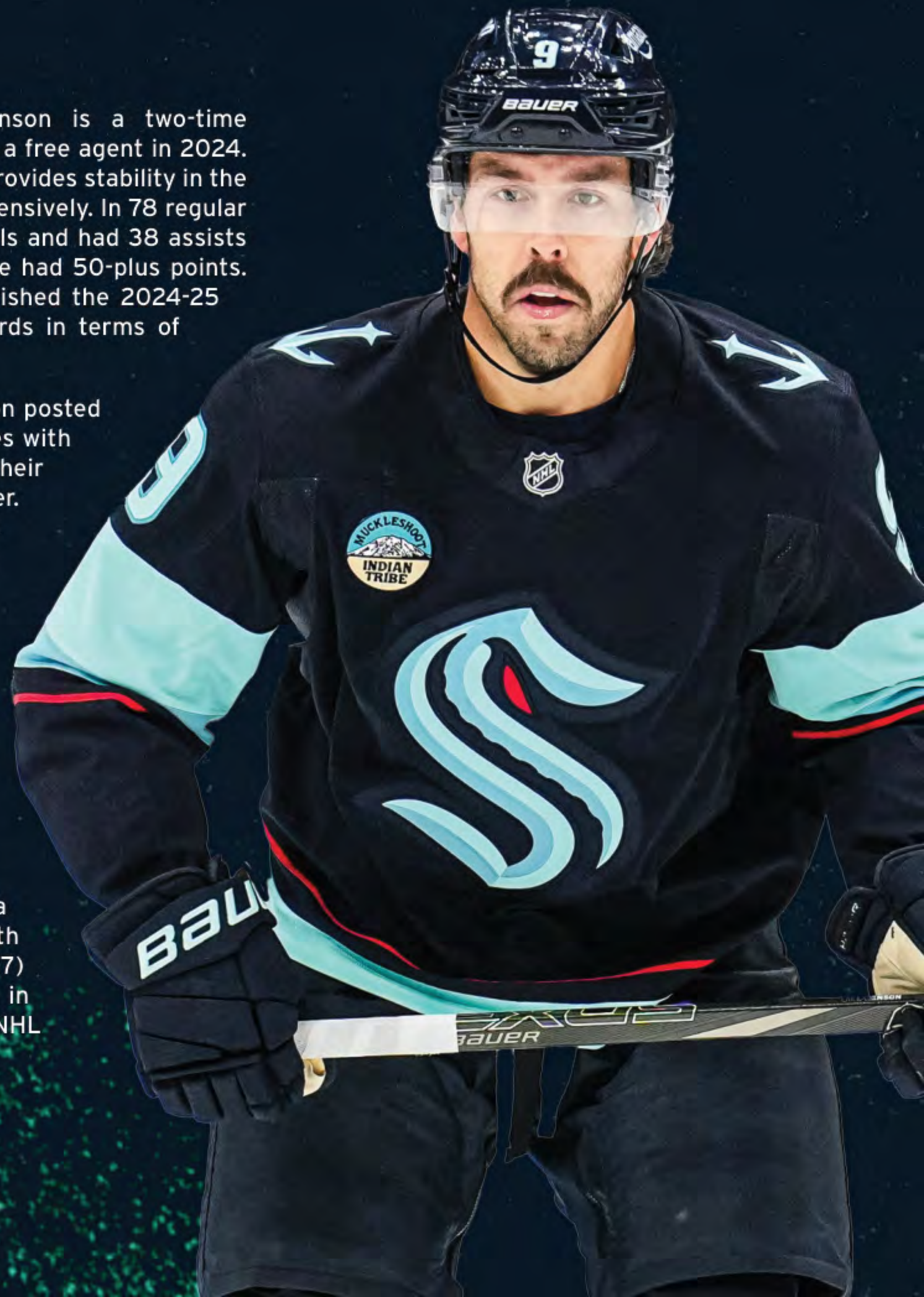
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	6'0" / 201 LBS	4/22/1994	SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

ABOUT CHANDLER: Chandler Stephenson is a two-time Stanley Cup winner who joined Seattle as a free agent in 2024. As a strong two-way center, Stephenson provides stability in the middle of the ice, both offensively and defensively. In 78 regular season games last year, he scored 13 goals and had 38 assists to mark the fourth consecutive season he had 50-plus points. Known for his hockey IQ, Stephenson finished the 2024-25 as the top passer among all NHL forwards in terms of completion rate.

Prior to coming to the Kraken, Stephenson posted a 75-162-237 stat line in 327 career games with the Vegas Golden Knights making him their seventh all-time goal, assist and point scorer. As a member of the Washington Capitals, Stephenson became the first rookie in Washington franchise history to score a shorthanded playoff goal in April 2018. He finished 2018-19 without taking a single penalty, setting a Washington franchise record. He is one of 11 players in NHL history to play in at least 64 games in a season without being assessed a penalty.

FUN FACTS: Stephenson is just the third player in NHL history to win a Cup with a team that he had previously defeated in a Cup Finals, joining Scott Niedermayer (with New Jersey in 2003 and Anaheim in 2007) and Billy Carroll (with the NY Islanders in 1983 and Edmonton in 1985) according to NHL Stats.



9

CHANDLER STEPHENSON

EELI TOLVANEN

20

FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
LEFT	5'10" / 182 LBS	4/22/1999	VIHTI, FINLAND

ABOUT EELI: Coming off a career-best 23-goal season with the Kraken, ranking second highest on the team behind the 26 from Jaden Schwartz. Surpassed the 20-goal mark for the first time on March 14 by scoring twice to key a 4-2 home win over Utah. Tolvanen enters this season in the final leg of a two-year, $6.95 million contract extension ($3.475 AAV) signed with the Kraken in the summer of 2024. Most Seattle fans - and forlorn Nashville faithful - know the Kraken claimed Eeli ("EH-lee) off waivers in December 2022 from a Predators team that drafted him No. 30 overall in 2017. Once put in the Seattle lineup on Jan. 1, 2023, Tolvanen scored a goal that day and has been a Kraken regular ever since.

He celebrated a full calendar year as a Kraken mainstay in the 2024 NHL Winter Classic, posting the game's first goal to deafening cheers from the 47,000-plus crowd. 'Tolvi' has earned significant time on the power play the past three seasons with his elite one-timer shot, prompting D-man Vince Dunn to urge his then-new teammate to "shoot the puck every time I pass it to you."

FUN FACTS: Notched a hat trick in his first Kontinental Hockey League game as an 18-year-old in 2017-18 and compiled a league record 36 points that season for a player under age 20, surpassing the prior mark by one-time Washington Capitals standout Evgeny Kuznetsov.

20

EELI TOLVANEN

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RYAN WINTERTON

26

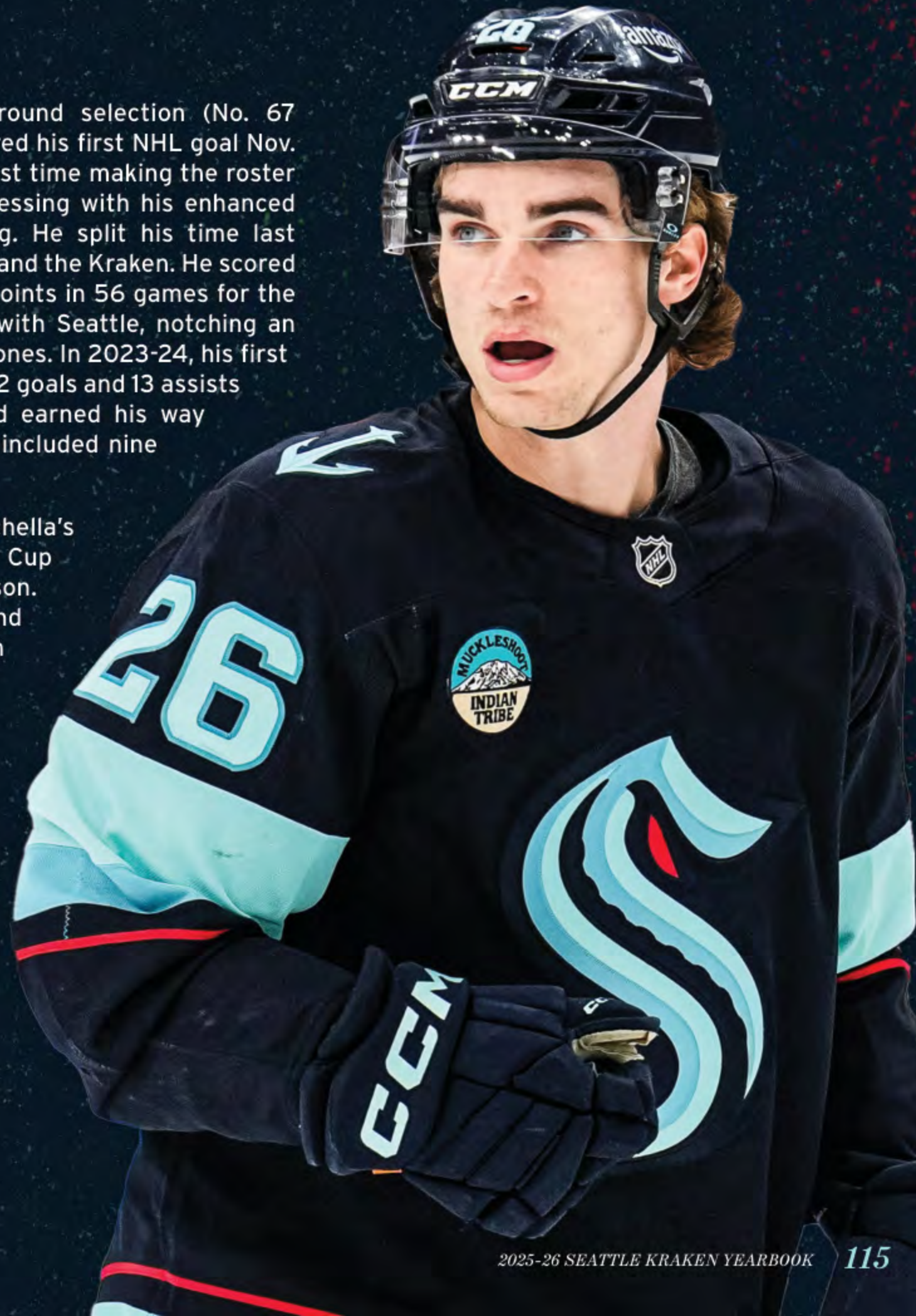
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'2" / 193 LBS	9/4/2003	MARKHAM, ONTARIO

ABOUT RYAN: The Kraken's third-round selection (No. 67 overall) from the 2021 draft class scored his first NHL goal Nov. 5 against San Jose. This year is his first time making the roster out of training camp, especially impressing with his enhanced speed from devoted summer training. He split his time last season between AHL Coachella Valley and the Kraken. He scored 18 goals and added 19 assists for 37 points in 56 games for the Firebirds and appeared in 12 games with Seattle, notching an assist and playing solidly in all three zones. In 2023-24, his first season in the AHL, Winterton scored 22 goals and 13 assists across 58 regular-season games and earned his way to his first call-up to the NHL, which included nine games over two stints.

Winterton was a big part of Coachella's second straight push to the Calder Cup Final during the 2023 AHL postseason. In 18 games, he scored seven goals and 12 total points, including two goals in the final game against Hershey. Prior to playing in the AHL, Winterton persevered through COVID-19 postponements and recovery from a shoulder injury to ultimately help push his OHL Hamilton team to a Memorial Cup Final appearance.

FUN FACTS: For the second straight summer, Winterton worked out the former NHLer Gary Roberts and a large Toronto-based group of NHLers, including Shane Wright, Tye Kartye and Vince Dunn.



26

RYAN WINTERTON

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SHANE WRIGHT

51

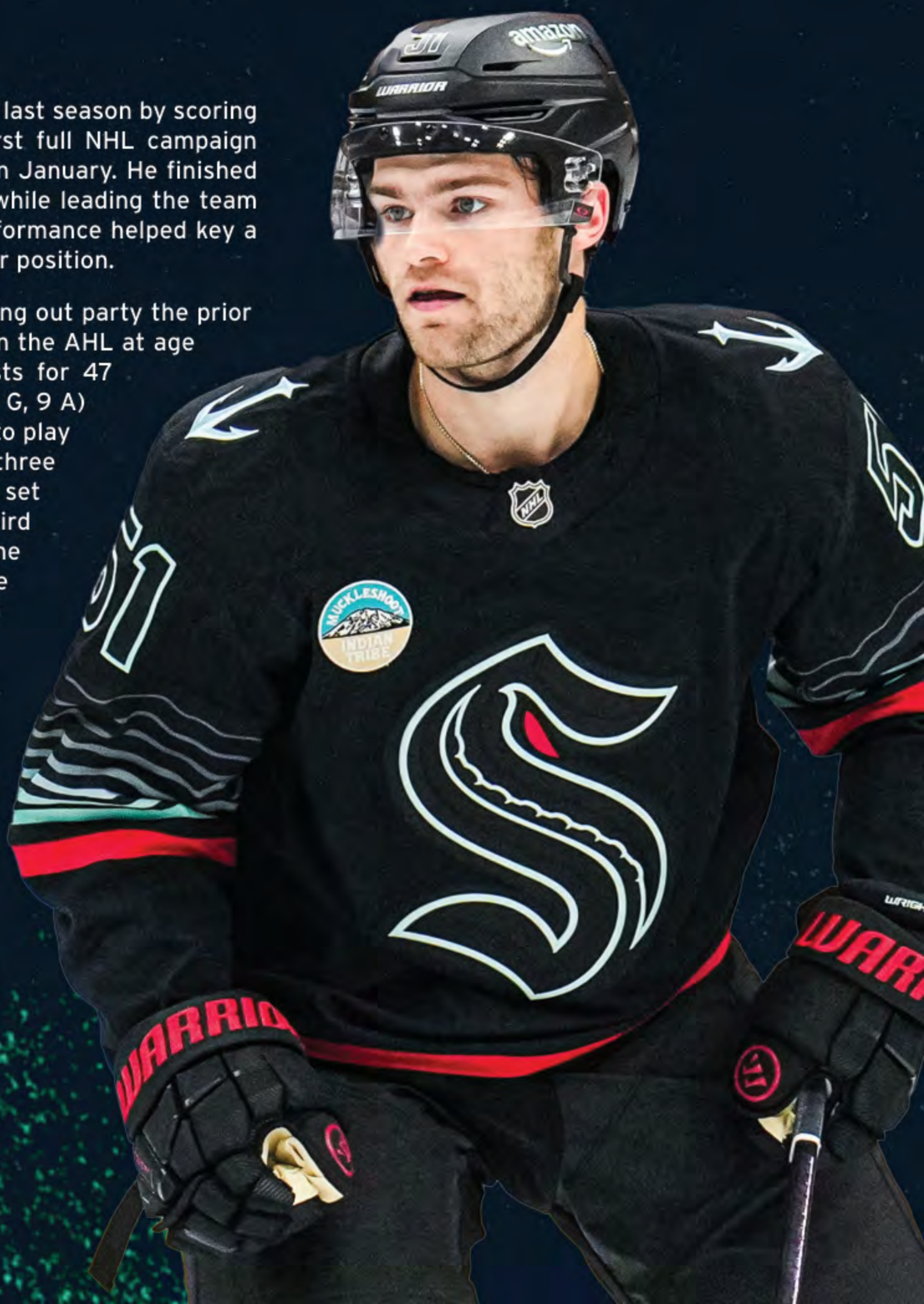
FORWARD

SHOOTS	HEIGHT / WEIGHT	BORN	HOMETOWN
RIGHT	6'0" / 192 LBS	1/5/2004	BURLINGTON, ONTARIO

ABOUT SHANE: Took a huge step forward last season by scoring 18 goals and adding 25 assists in his first full NHL campaign starting as a 20-year-old and turning 21 in January. He finished sixth in Kraken goals, assists and points while leading the team with seven power play goals. Wright's performance helped key a significant turnaround at the Kraken center position.

Wright had set the stage for his NHL coming out party the prior year, getting a special exemption to play in the AHL at age 19 and producing 22 goals and 25 assists for 47 points in 58 games. He added 13 points (4 G, 9 A) in 12 playoff games, returning from injury to play all six Calder Cup Final games. He notched three assists in a 5-4 Game 6 overtime loss, two set up linemate Ryan Winterton and his third assist on a Cale Fleury goal tied the game with three minutes left in regulation. He was widely considered CVF's best player during that AHL Final.

FUN FACTS: Wright's exemption to play in the AHL as a teenager wasn't the first time he'd been granted special permission to take the ice with older players. He received "Exceptional Status" at age 15 to play in the Ontario Hockey League during the 2019-20 season, winning Rookie of the Year honors with 39 goals and 66 points in 58 games Kingston.



51
SHANE
WRIGHT

IN THE SYSTEM

2021 DRAFT CLASS

VILLE OTTAVAINEN
DEFENSE
4th Round (99th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

JACOB MELANSON
FORWARD
5th Round (131st overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

SEMYON VYAZOVOY
GOALIE
6th Round (163rd overall)
2025-26: KHL
Salavat Yulayev

JUSTIN JANICKE
FORWARD
7th Round (195th overall)
2025-26: NCAA
Notre Dame

2022 DRAFT CLASS

JAGGER FIRKUS
FORWARD
2nd Round (35th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

NIKLAS KOKKO
GOALIE
2nd Round (58th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

DAVID GOYETTE
FORWARD
2nd Round (61st overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

TY NELSON
DEFENSE
3rd Round (68th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley

BEN MACDONALD
FORWARD
3rd Round (91st overall)
2025-26 NCAA
Harvard

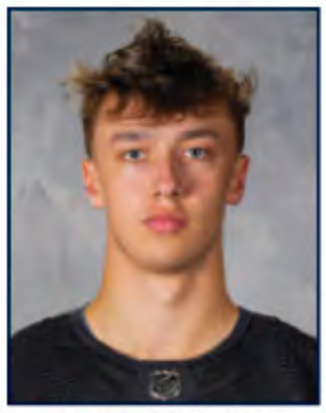
TYSON JUGNAUTH
DEFENSE
4th Round (100th overall)
2024-25: WHL Portland

BARRETT HALL
FORWARD
6th Round (164th overall)
2025-26 NCAA
St. Cloud State

IN THE SYSTEM

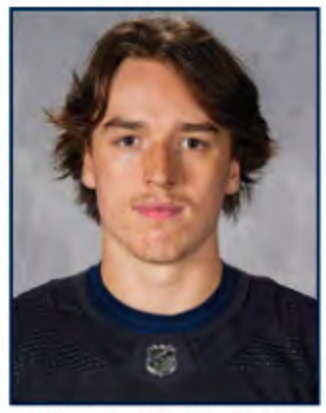
2023 DRAFT CLASS

EDUARD SALE
RIGHT WING
1st Round (20th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Coachella Valley



CARSON REHKOPF
CENTER
2nd Round (50th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Brampton

OSCAR FISKER MOLGAARD
CENTER
2nd Round (52nd overall)
2025-26: AHL
Jonkoping SWE



LUKAS DRAGICEVIC
DEFENSE
2nd Round (57th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Prince Albert

CADEN PRICE
DEFENSE
3rd Round (84th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Lethbridge

ANDREI LOSHKO
CENTER
4th Round (116th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Niagara

KADEN HAMMELL
DEFENSE
5th Rounad (148th overall)
2025-26: AHL
Everett

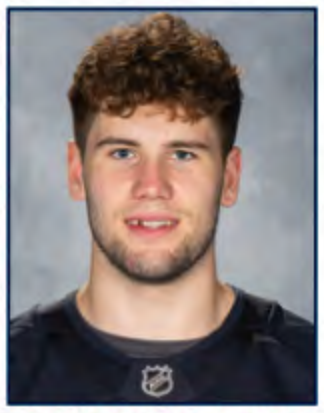
VISA VEDENPAA
GOALIE
6th Round (168th overall)
2024-25: Liiga
Karpat

ZEB FORSFJALL
CENTER
6th Round (180th overall)
2024-25: SHL
Skelleftea AIK

ZACCHARYA WISDOM
RIGHT WING
7th Round (212th overall)
2025-26 NCAA
Western Michigan

2024 DRAFT CLASS

JULIUS MIETTINEN
CENTER
2nd Round (40th overall)
2025-26 WHL
Everett



NATHAN VILLENEUVE
CENTER
2nd Round (63rd overall)
2025-26 OHL
Sudbury

ALEX BERNIER
DEFENSE
3rd Round (73rd overall)
2025-26 QMJHL
Baie-Comeau Drakkar

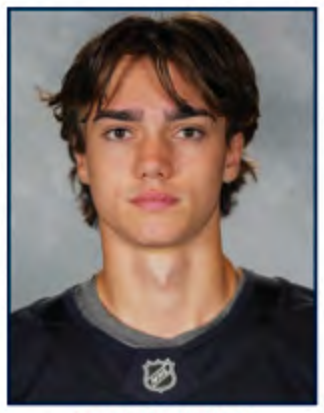
KIM SAARINEN
GOALIE
3rd Round (88th overall)
2025-26 Liiga
HPK Hameenlinna

CLARK CASWELL
FORWARD
5th Round (141st overall)
2025-26 NCAA
Denver

JAKUB FIBIGR
DEFENSE
7th Round (202nd overall)
2025-26 OHL
Brampton

IN THE SYSTEM

2025 DRAFT CLASS



JAKE O'BRIEN
CENTER
1st Round (8th overall)
2025-26 OHL
Brantford

BLAKE FIDDLER
DEFENSE
2nd Round (36th overall))
2025-26 WHL
Edmonton

WILL REYNOLDS
DEFENSE
3rd Round (68th overall)
2025-26 QMJHL
Acadie-Bathurst

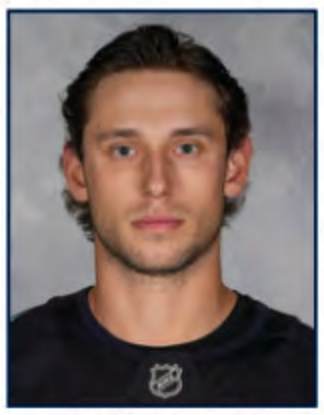
MAXIM AGAFONOV
DEFENSE
5th Round (134th overall)
2025-26 Russia VHL
Toros Neftekamsk

KARL ANNBORN
DEFENSE
7th Round (205th overall)
2025-26 SHL
HV71

LOKE KRANTZ
FORWARD
7th Round
2025-26 SHL
Linkopings HC

ENTRY LEVEL FREE AGENTS / TRADE ACQUISITION

LOGAN MORRISON
FORWARD
Signed April 11, 2023
2025-26 AHL
Coachella Valley



LLEYTON ROED
FORWARD
Signed March 27, 2024
2025-26 AHL
Coachella Valley

VICTOR OSTMAN
GOALIE
Signed April 3, 2024
2025-26 AHL
Coachella Valley

JON-RANDALL AVON
FORWARD
Trade acquisition, Sept. 4, 2025
2025-26 AHL
Coachella Valley

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OCTOBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 SD 7PM	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 COL 6PM
19 BAK 4PM	20	21	22 SJ 7PM	23	24 CGY 7PM	25 CGY 6PM
26	27	28	29	30 SD 6:30PM	31	

NOVEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1 COL 6PM
2	3	4	5 COL 6:30PM	6	7 TUC 6PM	8 TUC 6PM
9	10	11 BAK 6:30PM	12	13	14	15 BAK 7PM
16 ABB 5PM	17	18	19	20	21 SD 7PM	22
23 CGY 2PM	24	25	26	27	28 SD 7PM	29 TEX 6PM
30						

DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 TEX 6:30PM	4	5	6 ABB 7PM
7 ABB 4PM	8	9 CGY 6PM	10	11 CGY 6PM	12	13
14	15	16	17 SJ 6:30PM	18	19 BAK 7PM	20 BAK 7PM
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 ABB 6PM
28 HSK 5PM	29	30	31 BAK 5PM			

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2 SD 7PM	3 ONT 6PM
4	5	6	7 HSK 6:30PM	8	9	10 HSK 6PM
11	12	13 TEX 5PM	14 TEX 5PM	15	16	17 SD 6PM
18 ABB 5PM	19	20	21 SJ 6:30PM	22	23 ONT 7PM	24
25	26	27	28 COL 6:30PM	29	30 SD 7PM	31

FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1 ONT 3PM	2	3	4 SJ 7PM	5	6 HSK 7PM	7 HSK 6PM
8	9	10	11	12	13 TUC 7PM	14
15 TUC 3PM	16	17	18 BAK 6:30PM	19	20 COL 6:05PM	21 COL 6:05PM
22	23	24	25	26 HSK 6:30PM	27	28 BAK 6PM

MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4 HSK 7PM	5	6	7 CGY 6PM
8 CGY 3PM	9	10	11	12	13 ONT 7PM	14 ONT 6PM
15	16	17	18 SJ 10:30AM	19	20	21 COL 5:05PM
22 COL 2:05PM	23	24	25 CGY 6:30PM	26	27	28 SJ 6PM
29 SJ 3PM	30	31				

APRIL 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 ONT 6:30PM	2	3 ABB 7PM	4 ABB 7PM
5	6	7	8 HSK 6:30PM	9	10 ONT 7PM	11 ONT 6PM
12	13	14 SJ 7PM	15	16	17	18 SD 6PM
19 ABB 3PM	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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OPPONENT KEY

ABB	BAK	CGY	COL	HSK	SD	ONT	SJ	TEX	TUC
ABBOTSFORD CANUCKS	BAKERSFIELD CONDORS	CALGARY WRANGLERS	COLORADO EAGLES	HENDERSON SILVER KNIGHTS	SAN DIEGO GULLS	ONTARIO REIGN	SAN JOSE BARRACUDA	TEXAS STARS	TUCSON ROADRUNNERS

TROY BODIE

VP, HOCKEY AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

About Troy: Joined the American Hockey League affiliate Coachella Valley Firebirds in June 2021, focusing on hockey operations with Ron Francis and business matters to help establish the Firebirds in the AHL and the community. The 2022-23 inaugural season certainly established both, with capacity crowds in attendance for the Firebirds' Western Conference victorious championship series and coming within one overtime Game 7 goal from winning the league's Calder Cup. He concurrently served in a player development role with the Kraken, working with the 2021 Seattle draft class through travel and 1-on-1 phone calls.

Bodie was drafted by the Edmonton Oilers in the ninth round of the 2003 draft. He played nine years of professional hockey, including 159 NHL games with Anaheim, Carolina and Toronto. Troy is certainly familiar with AHL play: He appeared in 381 games (56 goals, 54 assists) with eight different AHL franchises over 10 seasons while also getting call-ups to the NHL.

Fun Fact: Troy and his Western Hockey League Kelowna Rockets won the coveted elite juniors Memorial Cup in 2004, the first-ever for the storied franchise.

DEREK LAXDAL

HEAD COACH

About Derek: "Lax" is in his 21st year as a head coach with junior teams in the Western Hockey League and Ontario Hockey League plus pro hockey stops in the Central Hockey League, ECHL and AHL. His playing days as a right wing started at 16 years old in the WHL in 1982 and spanned through the 2000-01 season, including 67 NHL games with Toronto and the New York Islanders, hundreds more AHL games and five seasons playing abroad in Great Britain.

In the important move of replacing Dan Bylsma as CVF head coach last season, what stood out was Laxdal's work with the Dallas Stars organization from 2014 to 2022. He served first as head coach of the AHL Texas Stars and then three seasons as an assistant coach with the NHL club. In 2018, Laxdal led the Austin-based Texas Stars to the Calder Cup Final, falling just short in seven games. During the 2020 pandemic-induced NHL bubble, Laxdal was part of Dallas reaching the Stanley Cup Final. His first season with the Firebirds involved a significantly younger team that nonetheless qualified for the playoffs, winning a round before falling a tight series to an Abbotsford (BC) that went on to win the Calder Cup.

Fun Fact: There are many elite NHLers who played for Laxdal's AHL teams, including Kraken stalwart defenseman, Jamie Oleksiak.

BRENNAN SONNE

ASSISTANT COACH

About Brennan: Sonne joined the CVF staff for the 2024-25 from his head coach position with the Western Hockey League (WHL) Saskatoon Blades. In his final season with Saskatoon, his team notched a 105-point (50-13-5) record in 2023-24 (tops in the WHL) and marked the first time Saskatoon totaled more than 100 points (48-15-5) in consecutive seasons. He is highly regarded for his player development and building relationship skills. With the Firebirds, he worked diligently with the forwards and the power play with kudos from his fellow coaches, veteran players and rookies alike.

Sonne was named the 2023-24 East Division finalist for the WHL Coach of the Year for the second consecutive year after winning the award in 2022-23. His three-season record with the Blades was of 136-54-14, including three consecutive WHL playoff runs and two Eastern Conference Final appearances. He spent six seasons as a WHL assistant with Saskatoon and Everett. As a player, Sonne appeared in 149 WHL games with Everett, Red Deer and Edmonton plus 65 games for the University of British Columbia.

Fun Fact: Brennan served four years as head coach for Ducs d'Angers in the Syberglace Ligue Magnus, the top hockey league in France.

STU BICKEL

ASSISTANT COACH

About Stu: Bickel joined the Firebirds coaching staff for the highly successful 2022-23 inaugural season after serving as the assistant coach for the AHL's Springfield Thunderbirds for the 2021-2022 hockey year. Bickel previously served as head coach and assistant general manager for the Minnesota Magicians in the North American Hockey League. He works tirelessly with the Firebirds defensemen corps and the team's penalty kill. Last season, he helped Ty Nelson (2022 third-round draft choice) rise from third pair to first pair with duties on both the penalty kill and power play. This year, he will be perhaps even busier with several Kraken prospects who are AHL rookies.

A native of Minnesota, Bickel worked as an assistant coach at alma mater University of Minnesota from 2018 to 2020. As an undrafted free agent signed by Anaheim in 2008, Bickel appeared in 76 NHL games from 2011 to 2015 for the New York Rangers and Minnesota Wild. The defenseman/winger played for six different AHL franchises over 10 AHL seasons and 310 games. He works with Firebirds defensive corps and penalty-kill units among other duties.

Fun Fact: Stu certainly knows about the various levels of hockey that AHL players have experienced. He skated in the NHL, AHL and ECHL pro levels, plus NCAA Division I, the USHL, North American Hockey League as an amateur.

IN DEVELOPMENT:
KRAKEN FUTURE

SEATTLE'S PROSPECT POOL IS HIGHLY RATED VIA SAVVY DRAFT PICKS, A VISIONARY PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GROUP AND TEAM'S CUTTING-EDGE PLAYER STRATEGY APPROACH AT THE NHL LEVEL

BY BOB CONDOR

The extraordinary work of two Kraken player development consultants was rewarded ahead of the 2025-26 season when Cory Murphy was named as director of player development and Justin Rai slotted in new position as director of player strategy. The moves fortify the growth of the Kraken prospect pool already considered among the top 10 in the league with just five draft classes and smart undrafted free agent signees.

Murphy has served the last two seasons as the point person for working with defenseman prospects, highlighted by his time with 2022 third-round draft choice Ty Nelson, who progressed from a third-pair defenseman role to top-four minutes with penalty kill and power play duties by last season's end with American Hockey League affiliate Coachella Valley. Similarly, 2022 fourth-rounder (No. 100 overall) Tyson Jugnauth, a star for Western Hockey League Portland, won the Bill Hunter Memorial Trophy as the league's best defenseman in 2024-25, leading all WHL defenders with 13 goals and 76 assists in 65 regular season games before posting a dazzling four goals and 29 assists for 33 points in a deep 18-game playoff run.

"It's just a huge honor," said Murphy. "Our main objective is making sure all of our prospects know we're here to help them in any way we can, continuing to monitor their progress and making sure they are on the right track moving toward the goals we have set for them."

Murphy recognizes that developing those prospects, which currently number more than 40 in the Kraken talent pool, teaches both the Kraken systems and style of play, plus individualizes each player's best chances to become NHLers, whether it be a shutdown or puck-moving D-men, a fourth-line agitator or a forward projected to score goals.

"Each prospect is unique and every player does have a different set of skills that are going get them to the league," said Murphy, who played 17 pro seasons,

appearing in 91 NHL games with Florida, Tampa Bay and New Jersey with significant stints in the American Hockey League along with the top pro leagues in Sweden, Russia and Switzerland. "It's our job to make sure we're clear with where we see the prospects' paths. We do everything we can to help them along that path to the NHL."

RAI STEPS INTO ELEVATED ROLE

In the Kraken's new role of head of player strategy, Rai works with Seattle's roster of players as part of the coaching staff. He engaged in conversations with Kraken general manager Jason Botterill and head coach Lane Lambert about joining the NHL team home and away after three seasons working with prospects from their draft years to debut seasons with Coachella Valley.

"In the NHL, it's all about winning and the players following a structure and consistency within that structure," said Rai. "My job is to be able to research the league, research our players and figure out the existing trends. Most specifically, it is my role to be additive to Coach Lane's staff, making sure players can better execute his structure at a higher level, staying on the same message as the coaching staff."

Rai's love of the game and childhood immersion into skills drills created by his field-hockey Olympian father sparked a post-playing day career into the cutting edge of player development. He is a deep thinker about what NHL players and prospects most need to learn to excel in games.

Rai's breakthrough to cutting-edge player development and player strategy came from doing a deep study of how the elite NHLers play without the puck, most specifically reading the play to come next.

"Over four to five years, I picked the top 25 guys in the world, which is subjective, but all players I like to watch and who led the league in points," said Rai, who played and coached in the British Columbia Hockey League. "I would clip them every single night of the season to figure out commonalities. Was it a read they made off the rush? Was it the way they moved, was it a deke they did? Was it an ozone off-puck movement?

"I realized these reads top-end players are doing reads within the coaching system, but they're finding ways to get themselves open. I looked for and identified commonalities among the players and turned it into a video program."

CONNECTING TO THE KRAKEN

That video program transitioned Rai from "less of a skills coach to a more player development-focused role." Rai started working with players about "their reads and the high-volume plays you're making, your off-puck movement, how that's affecting your overall play and the overall team's play." The Kraken front office has charted Rai's innovations and regularly hears rave reviews from Kraken prospects.

For Murphy, he began his post-playing career by serving as an assistant coach for three seasons in Sweden. When the Kraken offered a player development role, he was thrilled to follow his calling.

"I always gravitated toward the player development side," said Murphy. "When I was coaching and even toward the tail end of my career, I was thinking more about helping the young players I was playing with get better."

Murphy said part of his short-term plan as the new player development leader is to continue to work hands-on, video-on with the newest draft class of prospects, especially the four young defensemen picked in June. He plans to get on the road, work with them, and have player development consultants follow suit.

"Seeing the prospects in person is huge," said Murphy. "It gives us a chance to get into their home city, what they are going through, both on- and off-the-ice." ⚓

LAMBERT'S LENS

NEW HEAD COACH LANE LAMBERT HAS A CLEAR VISION FOR SUCCESS ON THE ICE. IT STARTS WITH EVERY PLAYER KNOWING HIS ROLE SO "THERE WON'T BE ANY GRAY AREAS"

BY ALISON LUKAN

When Lane Lambert was introduced as head coach of the Kraken back in May, he reinforced a focus on team structure and detail.

"A non-negotiable is playing the right way," Lambert said. "Everyone has to be on the same page and when they are, you will have success. Everyone is responsible for a job, a role. Everyone knows what that role is and there won't be any gray areas."

That's what hockey systems are all about – outlining the role, or "job" of every player when they are on the ice. To understand how Lambert wants his team to play, we sat down with him to discuss his vision for how the Kraken should play. Let's dig in.

DEFENSE

Kraken general manager Jason Botterill made it clear that a return to solid defensive play was a priority for 2025-26. Lambert carried that out with a focus on making the most dangerous netfront areas in the defensive zone off limits to other teams.

"Protecting the middle of the ice has always been critical for me," Lambert said. "The five players on the ice, their job is to put the goalie in the best environment to have success. If you look analytically at percentages of where goals go in from, is it a higher percentage from the middle, or is it a higher percentage from the boards? We all know the answer."

As for getting the puck back on Kraken sticks, Lambert will keep specifics to himself for now, but he does mention different philosophies -- including swarming and outnumbering -- saying the pieces the Kraken use will be "critical."

TRANSITION PLAY

In terms of defending entries, Lambert said "we want to stay on our toes, pressuring through the neutral zone and above our blue line." The coach said this sets up a better opportunity to transition the puck back the other way. He found success using a 1-2-2 forecheck in Toronto last season, putting the team in the top five in the league in zone entry denials.

"If you're just sagging and backing in, you're allowing the other team to potentially enter the zone," Lambert said.

Once the foe is stopped in the defensive zone, Lambert said his team will rely on a breakout structure that provides support coming out of the zone.

"Is there a time to take off? Sure. Is it maybe opponent based? Potentially," said Lambert. "But getting available for the person who has the puck with the strategy and with some routes that we know that are predictable to us is key in terms of coming out of the zone and entering the zone. Players can use their skill, but they have to understand the game [situation]. Do we need to get the puck in deep? Is this a potential turnover situation? It's always a risk-reward factor to be managed."

OFFENSE

The old adage in hockey is generating offense is more about creativity than structure. When asked if he agrees, Lambert says it's a little bit of both.

"It's interesting because [opponents'] defensive structure, for the most part, is so good that you have to use your instinct," said Lambert. "But you have to have offensive structure. You have to have somebody in front of the other team's goalie. If you don't have players 'taking their eyes away,' your percentage to score goals decreases."

Lambert said getting netfront allows for recovering loose pucks and winning puck battles to extend possession if a shot doesn't find the back of the net. Does Lambert want the Kraken to be a volume shooting team or one angling for high-quality chances?

"There's the mindset or the philosophy that the more pucks you put on net, the more chance it has to go in. There's also the mindset, like what we did in Washington when we won the Cup, we didn't shoot the puck a lot. We had high percentage shots. I think there's got to be a balance of both."

POWER PLAY

Power play strategy has evolved to be more about player and puck movement than formations. Puck movement is the big focus for Lambert. It's the key to pulling apart an opponent's penalty kill and creating what he calls "chaos."

"You've got to move the puck and then you have to strike while the iron is hot," Lambert said. "The iron is hot on a rebound, on a puck where the penalty killing team is not in structure...when there's chaos. If you look at power play goals, you don't see a lot of perfect plays. There's a lot of chaos goals. You see a lot of shots, tips, net presence, taking the goalies eyes away, ...people banging away at rebounds."

PENALTY KILL

On the other side of special teams, penalty kills have been changing things up systematically. More teams utilize a diamond formation. Some choose an aggressive system that isn't just boxing out netfront and blocking shots; it's also trying to take the puck from an opponent's power play.

Lambert has led penalty kills throughout his NHL tenure including the fourth best unit with Toronto during the 2025 Stanley Cup playoffs. He says his strategy has evolved over the years based on what you see in the game and what personnel you have.

"Penalty killing is about stick position," said Lambert. "It's about angles, it's about body positioning, and it's about four guys that absolutely 100-percent have to be on the same page ... If one guy goes, everybody goes – that's the key to applying pressure the right way."

Reading whether to hold the puck to knock time off the clock is important. But if opportunity presents itself, you can go for a scoring chance, especially on an odd-man rush.

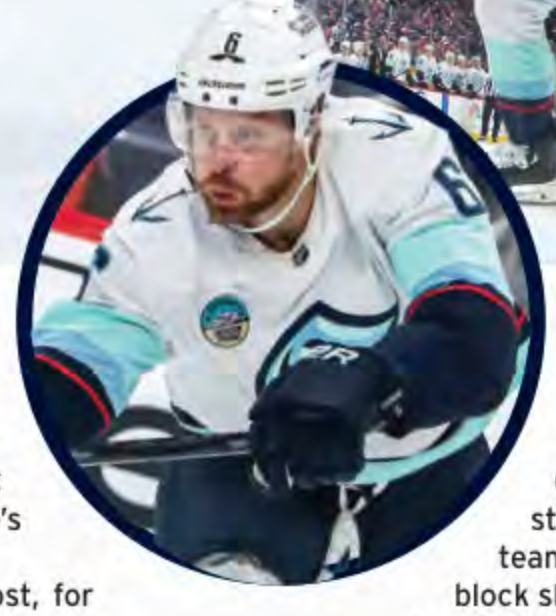
In fact, Lambert thinks differently about how penalty kills should be evaluated. He prefers an NHL stat called "Net PK%," that factors in shorthanded goals. You tally total power play goals against, subtract total number of shorthanded scores and divide that by the number of penalty kill opportunities.

"I think it's important," said Lambert, spoken like someone who has led top 10 penalty-kill units with the Nashville Predators (10th overall 2011-12), Washington Capitals (2nd, 2015-16; 7th, 2016-17) and the New York Islanders (6th, 2020-21; 4th, 2021-22; and 9th, 2022-23).

PUT STOCK IN THE BLOCK

LED BY THE DEFENSIVE CORPS, KRAKEN RANK AMONG THE NHL'S TOP TEAMS IN BLOCKING SHOTS, A TACTIC AND STAT NOW PART OF PROTECTING THE NET THAT REQUIRES COMMITMENT, FORTITUDE AND OCCASIONAL STITICHES

BY GEOFF BAKER



Kraken defenseman Ryan Lindgren has his share of horror stories about getting in front of pucks any way he can, including with his face. Playing for the New York Rangers in April 2023, he attempted an overtime block against Buffalo and took a slap shot to the jaw. He went in for treatment but was back on the bench minutes later for the shootout round.

"It didn't get me square in the face, but it got me pretty good in the face," Lindgren said. "That'll hurt. I got a couple of stitches or whatever, but I finished the game."

His new teammate at the time, veteran forward Patrick Kane, assumed Lindgren had broken his jaw and thought it was "crazy" that he came back. Early in his first season with the Kraken, the free-agent signee, he took a puck off his head late in regulation. He was woozy and helped off the ice, but didn't miss playing the rest of the road trip.

Kraken original Jamie Oleksiak is high on the team's all-time shot block list. He matter-of-factly said taking one or two pucks in painful spots is a byproduct of being committed to shot blocking. Fans will not be surprised that veteran Adam Larsson is the franchise's all-time leader.

"A big part of it is just willingness," said Oleksiak earlier this season.

The worst pain Oleksiak felt from blocks happened "a couple of times" when a puck struck under his pads and right on a knee. "When that happens, you have to get off and take a minute and get some blood flowing back in the knee," Oleksiak said.

Given those risks, Kraken teammates are often quite appreciative of the extra effort. The entire Kraken bench erupted when 19-year-old Kraken forward Berkly Catton, who blocked four shots in his first five NHL games, notched his first one in his NHL debut at Philadelphia during Seattle's first road trip of the season.

"It can be a big morale boost, for sure," Oleksiak said.

Shot blocking requires awareness of reading the space around you and knowing a shooter's angles. The cardinal rule when attempting a block, said Lindgren, is taking the far-side angle away and letting the goaltender handle anything to his short side.

"My first couple of years in Dallas I was trying to get in front of everything, and I think it kind of worked to our detriment," Oleksiak said. "Sometimes it's better to let the goalie see certain angles and not risk having a puck deflect off you. You've got to talk with the goalies about what their preferences are."

Shot blocking has increased significantly in the NHL, becoming a more systematic part of defensive strategy – as proven by the Kraken's widespread numbers throughout the lineup -- rather than back in the day when one or two brave souls carried the load. Equipment padding has also gotten thicker, while facial visors, once frowned upon in the 1980s and 1990s, are now standard.

Kraken head coach Lane Lambert, who played as an NHL forward in the 1980s and 1990s, offered a tongue-in-cheek explanation for why shot-blocking is on the rise.

"Maybe because they now keep the stats on that," he said, smiling.

On a more serious note, Lambert offered up insight: "If you're in the right position defensively, there are often times when the puck's going to hit you. This is, I guess, part of the (defensive) strategy. There are a lot of teams with a lot of players who block shots. We're included in that."

Lambert isn't wrong about shot blocking stats being a relatively new phenomenon that players can track and use to promote their abilities come contract negotiation time. The NHL only began tracking blocked shots in 2005-06, when just six teams averaged more than 14 blocks per 60 minutes over the course of that campaign. Last season, only five teams averaged *fewer* than 14 blocks.

Kraken goalie Matt Murray agreed with Lindgren that "shading the far side" of a shot from a good scoring position and allowing the goalie the short side is rule-of-thumb when attempting a block. It's much easier, he said, for the goalie to move a small distance to his short side for a save than "to go all the way back across the grain" to the far post.

There are times Lindgren won't even try blocking a shot if the shooter is far enough out and no other opponent is near the net.

"I just let the goalies see it," he said. "You don't want to stand there and screen them."

But when the game is on the line, the D-man won't hesitate to throw his body in front of any incoming frozen rubber. In fact, he'd be mad at himself for not doing it.

"I think it's something that guys really take pride in," Lindgren said. "Games are just so tight and so crucial nowadays. You're up by a goal late and guys are just throwing everything into it."

SETTING A

HIGH 'BARR'

EVEN BEFORE AN ARENA DEAL WAS SECURED, DIEHARD KRAKEN FAN JOHN BARR WAS MASTERMINDING AND NETWORKING VITAL SUPPORT FOR SEATTLE BEING AWARDED AN NHL TEAM. HERE'S HOW HE HELPED TRANSFORM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST SPORTSCAPE

BY DARREN BROWN

If you've ever watched a Seattle Kraken game from section 214 at Climate Pledge Arena, you've likely run into John Barr. A season ticket member who sits in Row 1, Barr hasn't missed a home game since the team entered the NHL during the 2021-22 season. Between attending every home game and following the team on occasional road trips, Barr has already seen more than 200 Kraken games in person.

Ostensibly, Barr is a diehard Kraken fan who—even after all those games—admits he still gets wound a little too tightly when he's at home games.

"I think I make the people around me nervous," said Barr with a laugh. "I am literally on the edge of my seat. I too am nervous, no matter the lead that the Kraken might have, no matter the scenario."

But you wouldn't have to ask too many people in the Seattle hockey community about Barr before learning that he's no ordinary fan. The team may not exist without his decade-long effort to lead a grassroots campaign to bring NHL hockey to Seattle.

Barr grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and spent his formative years as a competitive mogul skier. He didn't discover hockey until his 20s, when the NHL expanded to San Jose. The Sharks franchise introduced him to the sport, and it didn't take long before he was hooked.

"I was just blown away at the intensity, the physicality," said Barr. "The suspense of watching hockey games is just unparalleled. It's just been an amazing sport to find as an adult. I just went all in after that."

Barr later moved to Seattle, where he found what he believed was a city "ripe" for an NHL team. The more he explored and met people, the more he realized there were thousands of hockey fans who supported one of the local Western Hockey League teams or were fans of other NHL clubs. The hockey market existed, but it was disjointed. Barr found it hard to get together and talk hockey with like-minded people because of the varying hockey loyalties in the area.

CONNECTING LOCAL HOCKEY FANS

"The hockey market was much more robust than I thought it was before I moved here," said Barr. "There's so much support for the [WHL] Seattle Thunderbirds and the Everett Silvertips, but also, it had a very big adult hockey league at several rinks... There are a lot of hockey people in Seattle, but we all rooted for different teams. There was no real connective tissue."

Barr saw an opportunity to create that connective tissue with a big, hockey-related cause: bringing an NHL team to the city.

While most hockey fans in Barr's situation would simply think, I wish we had an NHL team here and go about their lives, Barr took it upon himself to create a movement. He launched the NHLtoSeattle campaign using a blog, social media and his top-notch networking skills. His plan was to do everything within his power to build community support for a team so that when the time came, Seattle could prove it was a worthy NHL destination.

There were many hurdles to clear for a team to end up in Seattle. The city needed a viable arena, an ownership group with the financial wherewithal to support a franchise and buy-in from the league itself to place an available team—either through expansion or relocation—in the market.

BEING 'ULTIMATE EXPERT" ON POTENTIAL NHL TO SEATTLE

Those are major obstacles for a regular guy with a full-time job to overcome. Barr knew he would never be an NHL owner himself, and he would not personally have a hand in building an arena or securing league approval. But what he could do was create support and excitement from the community.

"I just wanted to become the ultimate expert on everything that was related to the NHL potentially coming to Seattle," Barr said. "Then I would share my findings, or make sure I shepherded all the fans along as they might not have the same kind of commitment or time into it that I did."

Eventually, Barr created so much buzz through his NHLtoSeattle campaign that the market began gaining real traction toward landing a team. National media consistently referred to Seattle as the next place to get a franchise while several potential ownership groups and arena proposals came and went. In fact, there were a few moments when it appeared other arena options were going to go through, only to have those proposals fall apart. Barr called these moments "low points" in the process.

Bringing the NHL to Seattle would remain an unlikely dream if an arena didn't get built, so Barr focused his efforts on learning how he could influence that coming to fruition.

"I had to get familiar with how things get approved, how things move through city council, what are the different stages of a potential arena and all that . I would also keep an eye on any potential ownership or any moves by the NHL that would warrant a potential expansion, or, at the time, maybe a relocation to Seattle."

Barr was no longer just keeping fans

informed and creating buzz—he was actively pushing to make his dream a reality. He believed when the next opportunity came around, if he could demonstrate real support from the hockey community to the city council, he could make a tangible difference.

Enter the ownership group led by the late David Bonderman, along with Oak View Group, headed by Tim Leiweke, which would oversee the plan to turn the former KeyArena site into what is now Climate Pledge Arena. The group pledged to fund the project entirely with private money—something Barr knew would make it far more appealing to the Seattle City Council.

> *No person wanted this to happen more than John Barr. He was the steady, constant voice of bringing NHL hockey here to the PNW. He now serves on our foundation board. We are forever grateful for his support and being Fan No. 1!*
>
> *Tod Leiweke, Kraken CEO*

RALLYING FANS TO CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Still, he felt it was imperative the hockey community show visible support for such a massive undertaking. Perhaps the most important thing Barr did was rally hockey fans to show up at city council meetings when he knew arena-related decisions were being made.

When those decisions were on the docket, he called on the massive network of hockey fans he had developed over years of running NHLtoSeattle. Every time there was a city council meeting involving any kind of hockey discussion, he personally reached out to at least 100 people to get a handful of them to show up—no small feat in the middle of the workday.

"If no hockey people showed up to those city council meetings, who knows if the city council would have gone along with it," said Barr without any hint of self-congratulation. "Because they could have said, 'Well, if nobody cares about this, why should we bother?' "

For bigger meetings, Barr got dozens of fans to attend wearing NHLtoSeattle gear or hockey jerseys.

One person he called upon was Zoë Harris, who was then the Executive Director of the Western Washington Female Hockey Association (aka the Washington Wild).

SUPPORTING, GROWING, COACHING GIRLS HOCKEY

Barr and Harris first connected when Barr sent a cold email asking if the Washington Wild would support his cause. Not only did Harris pledge her organization's support, but she got Barr involved with the Wild.

"I got to know John, and I actually recruited him to coach the girls beginners program, where he soon became a favorite coach and then the head coach for that program," Harris said. "Soon after that, John asked me to recruit girls to go to the city council and make public comments about why we should have a team and on the memorandum of understanding for the arena."

The association's support proved invaluable in winning over the city council.

"We had various girls of various ages making public comment," said Harris. "We got great feedback from the council people, saying they thought hockey was just for the guys. The council members were really thrilled [an NHL franchise] could also create more opportunity for girls hockey plus figure skating."

When the 32nd franchise in the NHL was officially awarded to Seattle in 2018, an 11-year-old player named Jaina Goscinski from the Washington Wild stood front and center on stage for the announcement, proudly wearing her Wild sweater.

Barr had done it. A regular guy with a full-time job who had fallen in love with hockey in his 20s had led a grassroots campaign that gained so much traction, expansion to Seattle became as close to a no-brainer for everyone involved as possible.

While Barr accomplished what once seemed unthinkable, Harris's journey had only just begun. Inspired by Barr's success and commitment to growing the sport in the region, she founded her own campaign—Women's Pro Hockey Seattle. She asked Barr for guidance. He gladly shared what had worked—and what hadn't—for him.

Barr encouraged Harris to establish guiding principles for her organization, something she took to heart.

"I think the guiding principles were primarily about growing the game, networking, connecting with the community, just building excitement," Harris said.

So Harris, too, set out on what felt like a near-mpossible journey. Yet with Barr's campaign as a blueprint, Harris succeeded in rallying enough support for the Professional Women's Hockey League to also eventually land the Seattle Torrent expansion team in 2025.

"It's five-and-a-half years after the launch of our campaign," said Harris, "but we've had some huge women's hockey events here, such as the [USA versus Canada] Rivalry Series. The PWHL came and played here in Seattle just this last January. Five years was a long time in terms of a day in, day out, long haul. But in retrospect, it feels like it's a flash."

PUCK LUCK: ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

The sports landscape in Seattle has forever changed, thanks largely to the efforts of Barr and, in recent years, Harris, proving that if you can create a strong enough bond in the community over a common cause, anything is possible.

For Barr, who now covers the Kraken as part of the Sound Of Hockey Podcast and soundofhockey.com, following the team up close is truly a dream come true.

"There's still moments that blow my mind a bit," Barr said. "It's just insane to see a team with a Seattle logo on its jersey, playing NHL hockey here."

That's a regular guy talking about his big hockey idea. He's part of creating the many more generations of hockey dreams ahead.

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'STRAIGHT FROM THE ABYSS'

FANS CAN BASK IN THE KRAKEN'S GLOW-IN-THE-DARK, BLACK-ON-BLACK THIRD JERSEY. IT'S MYSTERIOUS, MENACING AND BATTLE-READY

Third has never looked better. As in when you see the Kraken's 2025-introduced, all-black third jersey to be worn by players 12 times this season, your No. 1 thought will trend to "where can I get the jersey and is there related merchandise too?"

That's an easy answer: Jersey and "merch", including a full line of accessories featuring the new crest and other touches, is available at Kraken Team Stores and online. The team will wear the jersey 12 times this season, 11 at home plus a road game at Edmonton.

In keeping with the mystery of the Kraken brand, the innovative third jersey features a black crest with an Ice Blue outline that glows in the dark. The glow factor continues on the jersey shoulders, and on the numbers and names on the back (including Jordan Eberle's "C" and the "A" worn by alternate captains). The overall effect is both breathtaking and battle-ready.

"The jersey is phenomenal," said Eberle. "The glow-in-the-dark element is truly unique, and it's such an eye-catching look. I love the inspiration behind it and all the details that went into the design."

"We definitely wanted to make it more intense and scarier than our other jerseys," said Aaron Wiggan, the team's vice president of brand. "You feel something lurks beneath the surface of the third jersey. It's spookier, darker, heavier and gutsier."

Wiggan and the Kraken design team, in partnership with the NHL and Fanatics, collaborated to gather inspiration for the third jersey via the bioluminescence of Pacific Northwest waters. Bioluminescence is the emission of light via chemical reaction to ward off predators among living organisms, in this case sea organisms such as various plankton, certain fish, squid and, of course, a lurking sea monster we all love and opponents fear.

Researchers will tell you there is a lot more unknown and mysterious about bioluminescence than they know. Sounds just right for Kraken third-jersey nights and "Defending the Deep" mythically lighting up the Kraken's home-ice advantage.

"We wanted to create something menacing," said Wiggan. "We drew our inspiration from the eerie shadows of the deep Pacific Northwest waters. The result is the black crest lit by the beautiful, enthralling glow of bioluminescence bordering on danger and disruption for opponents. This is a jersey pulled straight from the abyss."

-- Bob Condor

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